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FRONTIER TIMES

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True Stories of the West!

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"The files of TRUE WEST and FRONTIER TIMES are going to be of great historical value and should be preserved in all the libraries of the country."— Walter Prescott Webb, former President, American Historical Association.

In This Issue—

EDITORIAL 3
FRONTIER POST 4
ALASKA BOUND! ..... Kenneth Gideon 6
DOUBLE HANGING AT LINCOLN ..... Eve Ball 10
TRAILS GROWN DIM 13
SLATE MOUNTAIN'S GOLDEN TUNNEL ..... Maurice Kildare 14
BULLY OF THE TOWN ..... Alex Williams 16
A TREK TO THE GOLD FIELDS ..... Washington Bailey 18
WHEN HORSE TRADING WAS A PROFESSION ..... Jay J. Kalez 24
NUGGETS 26
WESTERN BOOK ROUNDUP ..... The Old Bookaroos 29
HENRY WICKENBURG'S OLD COLT ..... Fred E. Warner 30
TAME THE WILD RIVER ..... Ed Earl Repp 34
HORSEHEAD CROSSING ..... Eugene R. Anderson 36
THE STOLEN CLAIM ..... M. L. Caya 39
TUMBLEWEEDS ..... Tom K. Ryan 72

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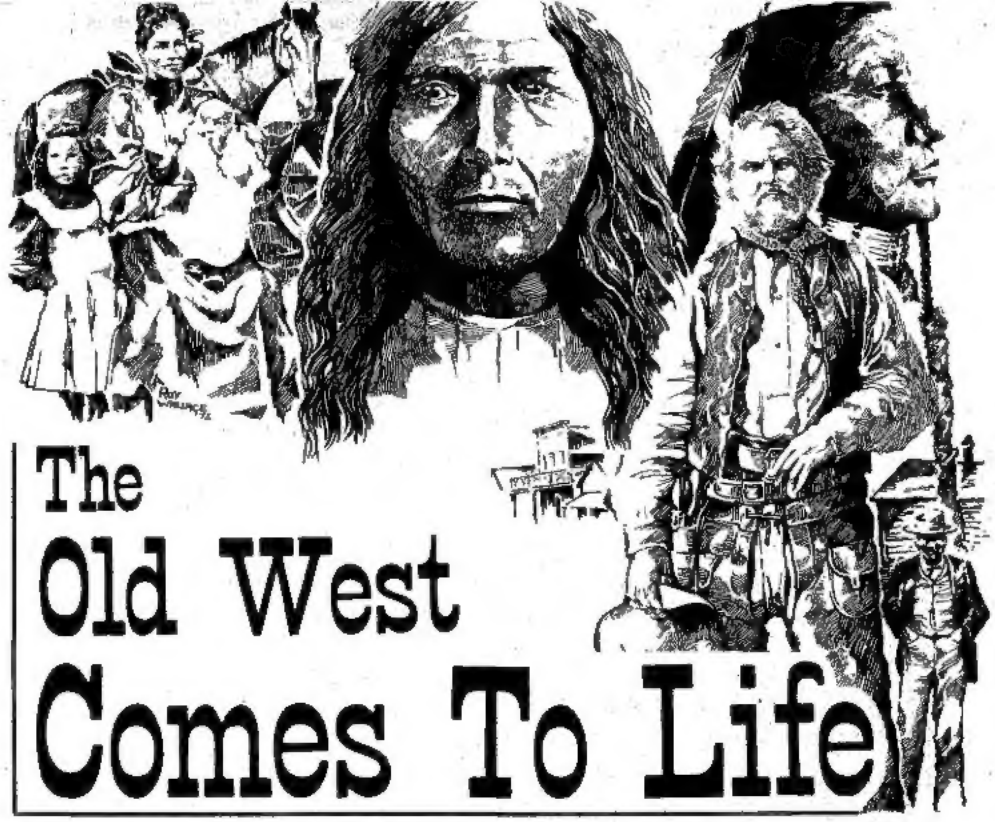
Hosstail Note: Probably nobody in his right mind would do this—but whoever said I had a "right mind"? I am running this editorial on Hunter's FRONTIER TIMES in all three of our Western Americana magazines because you can't imagine how many people miss it when any message or advertisement is run in only one magazine. Whether we have that many extra newsstand readers or whatever the heck it is—nevertheless it's true. So, if you have read this already, if would sure help if you passed it along to a friend and hold your hawg-laig on the scalawag and make him or her read it. Thanks!



The Old West Comes To Life

THIS just might be the most important little article I have ever written—the message, I mean, not the quality of writing!

I have some magazines spread out before me that cause little electric thrills to run up my spine. These bound copies of the old FRONTIER TIMES, published by J. Marvin Hunter, are dramatic testimony to a man's life dream. What blood, sweat, tears, hope and WORK must have gone into them! The first issue is dated October 1923 and the last, December 1954. The magazine was published monthly until the very last when age and poor health caused him to turn it over to a lesser light.

Hunter told me that I was the only man in the country that he would trust to carry on with his lifetime ideals of publishing a magazine dedicated to reporting old-time events exactly the way they happened. Whether this has been done or not is completely open to debate! All I can say is I have tried to keep the promise I made to him.

J. Marvin Hunter was one of the finest men I have ever met. He was located in Bandera, Texas when Fred Gipson and I visited him. The story had gotten out that Hunter had an old-time wooden barrel full of newspaper clippings and when he got ready to put out an edition of FRONTIER TIMES he reached in the barrel, pulled out a handful of clippings and started setting type! We saw the barrel, all right. It was about two-thirds full of *very* old newspaper clippings. But the story, as most rumors are, had to be false. He used actual first-hand accounts of old-timers; he printed books and serialized them in his magazine (or vice-versa); and he was an energetic firebrand as a whole in preserving a history that is becoming increasingly hard to believe by our modern-day generation.

Former president of the American Historical Association, Walter Prescott Webb, told me that if I ever had trouble with my three Western Americana magazines it would be because people in this atomic age simply would not be able to *comprehend* a life such as we had in the comparatively brief span of what we call the *Old* West. He told me also in these very words, "There is a gold mine of information and pure history in these old issues of FRONTIER TIMES!"

It was strange to me that within a six-months period, J. Frank Dobie and Fred Gipson told me the same thing in almost the same words! Each statement had "gold mine" in it with reference to the magazine's unmatchable material.

IN addition to valuable history, these old issues flat keep you on the edge of your chair! Coming from the reporter's pen (who most times was there on the scene) was what actually happened before his eyes—at least the way he saw it. It proves conclusively that documentary old-time stories do not necessarily have to be dull. When you mention this to Hollywood, or the movie and TV industry as a whole, they can't believe it—"documentary" is synonymous with "dull" to them. If they would only take time to read some of these old issues and some of the hair-raising *true* accounts, it would make some of their sensational fiction look a bit silly!

I just can't refrain from giving you a partial contents list of Vol. 1, No. 2 that will be coming to you soon (if you subscribe, of course!). This is on the outside cover of the November 1923 issue of FRONTIER TIMES: (*Ben Dragoo's Race for Life: Texas Rangers Were First To Use Six-Shooters; The Lone Star Flag of Texas; Indian Raids in West Texas; Reunion of a Pioneer Family at Ballinger; Shot With a Poisoned Arrow; Hunting Buffalo on the Little Wichita; Texas and Nacogdoches of Unknown Origin; Horrible Massacre Described by a Survivor; Trail of Blood Along the Texas Border; A Survivor of the Mier Expedition; J. C. Bryant Has Had Eventful Career; Bloody Career of Billy the Kid; Reconstruction Days in San Antonio; A Plea for County Historical Societies; Killing of Lieutenant Carter.)*

Don't confuse the above with the issue we want you to start out with—Volume 1, Number 1, which is advertised on the inside back cover. And for gosh sakes read that WHOLE PAGE!

WE are publishing these old issues *exactly as they were.* They are facsimile copies with *nothing* changed. Sometimes Hunter would leave an inside cover, or both, blank so we'll print a little message on them concerning anything confusing that might arise. For instance, if the articles were taken from newspaper accounts, old manuscripts, etc. that were written WHEN IT HAPPENED, you wouldn't expect the authors to be alive. Also, we are leaving the advertisements as they were. Many of them are absolutely fascinating but please don't write for something that was advertised then at $4.95 which today would cost about $50.00! Some people will—we know! And remember that addresses given are nearly fifty years old!

We are hoping to accomplish a number of things in reprinting these old issues. They are reproduced on better paper and should last forever. We hope to help people fill out their collections, start new collections and especially do we hope to bring back the "feel" of the times. Every library in the country should have a collection of these magazines—but how are we going to let them know? As usual, we have got to depend on you to tell people, show your copies to libraries, and help in any way possible.

You just can't read this magazine without getting excited, whether you are a professor, white-collar worker, muskrat trapper, or—well, I think if you are breathing and care anything whatsoever about our past, you're a candidate for goose pimples!

Again, READ THAT ANNOUNCEMENT ON THE INSIDE BACK COVER!—Hosstail.

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FRONTIER POST

Remembers Storms

I read the articles about rain, hail and wind storms in the September 1971 FRONTIER TIMES with a good bit of interest, I guess partly because I remember them so well and also because they just about scared the pants off me when I was a kid in the northeastern part of Colorado, western Kansas and Nebraska country. So many lightning strikes, the howling winds and the hail! I remember seeing one cyclone "tail" for a few minutes once—it was quite a ways off and we never heard of it doing any damage.

Those summer storms that came up from the west and the Rocky Mountains were sure something to watch and remember. Sometimes the cloud could be seen far to the west early in the morning and would keep building up against a breeze from the east-southeast. They would hit the old home place south of Brush, Colorado anytime from noon to midnight. About twenty or thirty minutes before they hit, the breeze would die completely and it would be a total calm. About then you'd better hunt shelter if there was any handy!

Then you could see a cloud of dust coming and the roar of the wind and the thunder and lightning would seem to all cut loose at the same time. What a show it could be! The cloud could come right on over, or it could split and part go around each way or all one way. You could see it raining or hailing a solid sheet and maybe just a sprinkle or nothing in the middle. The hail clouds were kind of a greenish color and as they got close would turn white, and the roar of them you could not mistake!

My brother and I made it to the open granary door just ahead of a mean looking cloud once, a good place to watch the show. The saddle horse was in a corral joining the barn, which had a metal shed roof on one end. Hailstones about the size of small pullet eggs started falling and a few hit him on the back and head. Luckily the shed door was open as he sure lost no time getting in there. The racket of those big hailstones on the metal roof was too much for him, though, and out he came, only to get whacked again! In again—out again— about five round trips and it quit hailing. He was sure enough spooked! We had to laugh at his antics though for him it wasn't a bit funny. His back, head and ears were covered with welts about the size of the stones that hit him.

A few miles west of Bushnell, Nebraska, the fall of 1929-30 or thereabouts, I saw where a near cloudburst and hail storm had passed through about thirty minutes before. In one place the water and hailstones had washed across a big field of red spuds toward a culvert. It couldn't get through fast enough. Spuds and hail had drifted one to three feet deep—there were tons and tons of them. That was the only red-tinted hail I ever saw!

In 1927 the town of Potter, Nebraska, between Kimball and Sidney, recorded a hailstone that weighed twenty-four ounces. I remember this very well, but had forgotten the date and the weight until a few months ago I saw this item in a magazine or paper that read, "A chunk weighing more than twenty-six and one-half ounces hit Coffeyville, Kansas, September 3, 1970, and became the world's biggest recorded hailstone, displacing the twenty-four ounce former record holder which hit Potter, Nebraska, forty-three years earlier."

I have seen first-hand what hailstones up to the size of small eggs can do to all kinds of crops, roofs and also to the top, hood and fenders of a Model "T" Ford touring car. You sure want to be under a mighty good roof when chunks that big start coming down!—Ralph R. Miller, 712 W. Jackson Street, Medford, Oregon 97501

Approaching storms in the Oklahoma Strip, May 1937. The town above is possibly Hooker or Guymon, Oklahoma. Perhaps a reader can identify it. Below, a farm with storm clouds in the background.

Remembers Coburn

I was sure sorry to hear of Walt Coburn's passing, as I am familiar with the Missouri River country, having at one time had a homestead about six miles below the mouth of the Judith River. That was in 1916. Walt was one of the greatest in my book.

My folks landed in the little town of Payette, Idaho from Montana in 1912. After one year they rented a ranch of about 700 acres about three miles east of Emmet, Idaho. There was lots of bunch grass country in the foothills and we had a nice little bunch of horses—mostly

(Continued on page 38)

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- Special Game Protector
- Game Management Officer
- Game Manager
- Wildlife Officer
- Wildlife Protector
- Conservation Officer
- Conservation Inspector
- Big Game Census Assistant
- Forest Insect Ranger
- Pest Control Assistant
- Fish & Wildlife Assistant

FISHERIES SERVICE
- Fish Warden
- Fish Management Specialist
- Fisheries Technician
- Fish Hatcheryman
- Fish Culturist

PROFESSIONAL HUNTER
- Government Trapper
- Mammal Control Agent
- Hunting Guide
- Wilderness Guide

PRIVATE INDUSTRY
- Game Farm Manager
- Game Preserve Manager
- Nature Center Manager
- Tree Farm Manager

FOREST & PARK SERVICE
- Assistant Park Ranger
- recreation Area Manager
- Park Attendant
- Forest Fire Warden
- Fire Inspector
- Fire Control Aid
- Forest Fire Lookout
- County Ranger
- Forest Officer
- Forestry Technician
- Inspector

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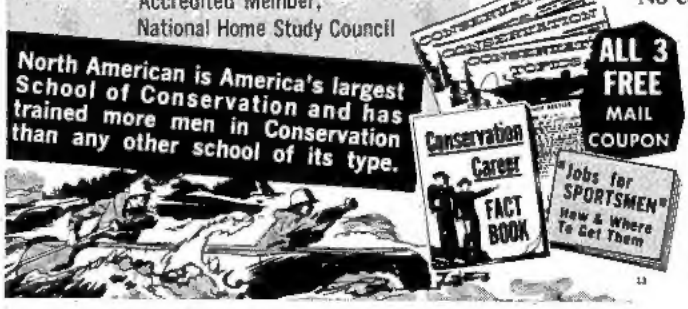

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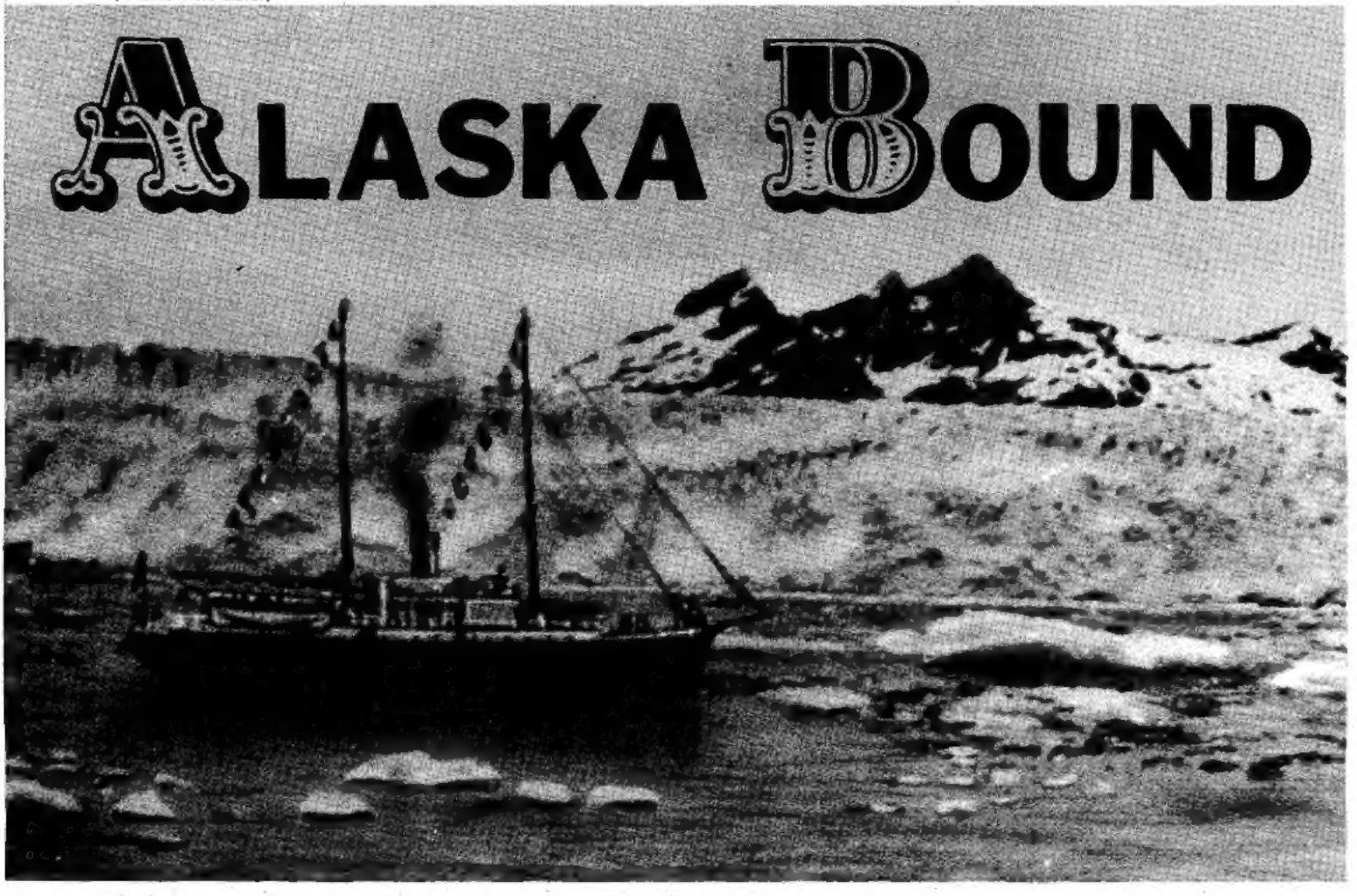
A young mining engineer put his textbooks away and started reading between the lines. Turning theory into practice began with the stench of a freighter and carried on with the moose flies of Crow Creek . . .

Courtesy Alaska State Library

ALASKA BOUND



Above: Kenneth Gideon boarded the S. S. Dora for the last leg of his journey up Cook Inlet. It is pictured here at Columbia Glacier near the portage to Turnagain Arm and Crow Creek, Alaska. Below: Kneeling with his team of huskies, taken at Tacoma, Alaska, 1918. Opposite page: Top left: Crow Creek just above the canyon. The "giant" (center) is the hydraulic nozzle used in removing boulders. Top right: Canyon and falls near the lower end of Crow Creek. Center: Kenneth Gideon during his first winter in Alaska.

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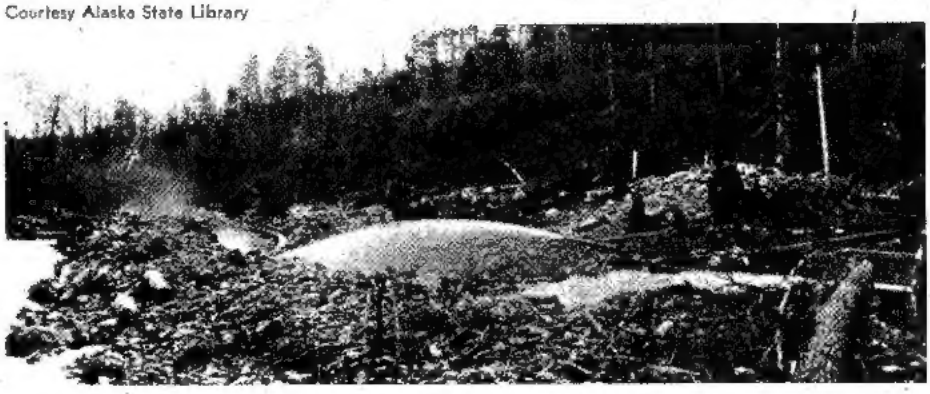

Courtesy Alaska State Library

Excerpted through permission from
WANDERING BOY - Alaska—1913 to 1918
By KENNETH GIDEON
© 1967 by GAIL A. GIDEON

Photos Courtesy Gail A. Gideon

THE TERM "hellship" is a favorite phrase used by those who would describe a ship, its crew, and the food and quarters provided for the crew, and the usual cordial hatred of the crew for the captain and mate, and equally cordial hatred and contempt, thrown in for good measure, of the captain and the mate for the crew. I don't know anything about the social relationships existing between the crew and the officers of the *Admiral Evans*. All I know is that all the descriptions I had ever read of a hell of a hole were inadequate to describe what I saw, smelled, and heard when I crawled down that ladder into the steerage one day in April, Alaska-bound, for Crow Creek.

A dim light hung here and there, enough to enable one to prowl around and find an unoccupied bunk. Passageways were clogged with nondescript baggage of all sorts: packsacks, rolls of bedding, old valises, tool chests, and gunny sacks containing anything you might mention. The bunks were two abreast and two-high with a narrow runway between each tier, this apparently being the arrangement that would permit the greatest number to be accommodated. I hunted around until I found an upper, piled my stuff on it, and climbed back on deck. There were some friends on the dock who had come down to see me off, and they afterward said I presented an appearance of total dejection as I crawled out of that hole onto the short deck forward that was allowed steerage passengers as a promenade.

The next morning we had breakfast. Some did, that is. But that evening and the first night served a rather healthy purpose in that our sensibilities were benumbed by the shock of the whole thing, and from then on we made the best of it. There was another young chap on board who was going to Crow Creek and we—Art and I—teamed up.

The man in the bunk under mine was a quiet sort who acted as though nothing would suit him better than to keep in the background out of sight. He stayed most of the time in his bunk. It wasn't that someone had stolen his pants, but it developed he had failed to secure one item quite essential on a trip of this kind —namely, viz., and to wit, a ticket.

The steerage steward was a smallish man who had a harelip and lisped. He had an irascible temper and was forever transmitting his orders to the mess boys in cleft-palate profanity which became the main source of entertainment and the object of continuous attempts by the passengers to imitate. There was the usual percentage of drunks the first night out, some worse than others.

The villain of the piece, however, was not the steward; it was the purser. This character seemed to feel that on his efforts alone depended the success of the company. He counted noses and against that total he checked his ticket stubs. The books didn't balance. There were two noses too many in the steerage. So the second day out, down into the hold he came with several sailors, who served the double purpose of keeping the lads from milling around too much while he checked them and also acted as a deterrent to anyone who might be tempted to bash in his head with a bed slat.

That first checkup netted him no results. The man in the lower under me in some way slipped by. The other one had a system. He had a white coat—a waiter's coat—and the night the ship sailed he slipped behind a pile of lumber on the dock, took off his suit coat and cap, put on this white coat, mussed up his hair, threw his suitcase on his shoulder, and elbowed his way past passengers and ticket takers and made his way down into the steerage. Off came the coat which he kept handy at his pillow. When the purser came to check, he would sneak into the white coat and arrange himself in some spot, usually the toilet, with just the coat showing. He got by the whole trip.

"Mr. Quiet," under me, was caught about the second checkup and was put off at Ketchikan. Just before the ship sailed he slipped back on again but this time he was found, and as an example to any others who might contemplate such an affront to the dignity of the officers and gentlemen of the line, these officers and gentlemen placed him on the bridge where those in the pilothouse could

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watch him. He had no overcoat and how he stood that wind is a mystery. He was put ashore at Petersburg and we heard no more about him. The steerage howled with rage, and whenever the purser showed up, curses and threats would issue forth from the dark corners. What they were going to do to him if they ever caught him ashore was dreadful to hear, but as far as I know it never got past the stage of anonymous cursing in the dark.

THE FOOD was another item about which the less said, the better. In the after end of the steerage quarters was a long table, and three times during the day this table would be set with tin plates, tin knives, tin forks, and tin spoons. At mealtime a huge kettle of stew would be started down one side, and you fished out a portion for yourself as it went by. Possibly under different surroundings it might have tasted all right but Art and I couldn't take it.

In the steward's department on these ships you could bribe your way through a steel bulkhead without disturbing a rivet. Art had a few dollars and his first attempt was an effort to crash the main dining saloon topside. A little "cumshaw" in the right places and he started off okay. I was somewhat more timid and was to follow if he made out, which he did for one meal. And then the purser appeared again, and down came Art. The crew's mess, forward of our quarters, offered pleasant possibilities, however, and that was tried out with great success. The food was fine and apparently it was out of the purser's jurisdiction.

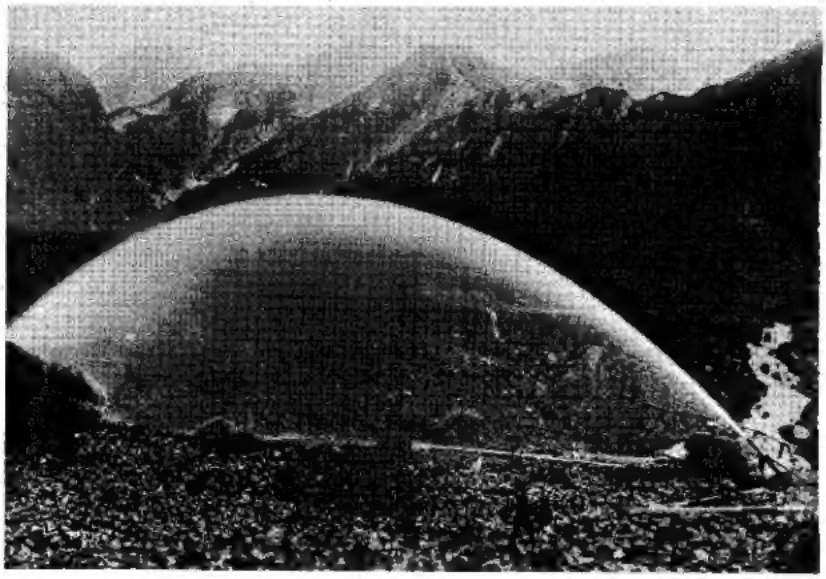
The *Admiral Evans* took us as far as Seldovia where the supplies were unloaded and then reloaded on a small steamer called the *Dora*. This ship hauled freight and passengers up and down Cook Inlet during the summer. In winter the inlet was filled with floe ice, immense chunks the size of houses that drifted back and forth with the tide. Since there was a forty- or fifty-foot tide in the inlet, this combination of current and ice was a formidable one, so much so that the mail boat owner who allowed himself to get caught trying to make that last trip in the fall was lucky if he got through himself, leaving his boat to drift back and forth until the crushing chunks of ice finished it. But this was spring and the ice was gone as we chugged up to Knik.

From there we came back to Turnagain Arm and, catching the tide, went in as far as Sunrise, where we anchored and waited until the tide was out so that our lone woman passenger could walk ashore. She had some luggage which she was carrying with some difficulty, and a man was waiting for her on the shore. "Just standing there to beat hell," observed one of the crew.

When the tide came in we steamed across to Girdwood and unloaded. This was the by now familiar process of loading a small boat and rowing ashore, discharging and coming back until all passengers and freight were off. So far

Above: A sluice box in operation in terrain very similar to Crow Creek, Alaska.

Lower left: Crude rock dam used to impound water for hydraulic sluicing. Middle right: Hydraulic "giant" in operation. The powerful stream of water was directed at sand and gravel banks, washing the material into the sluices where the gold was recovered. Lower right: Another view of hydraulic mining operation near Crow Creek.



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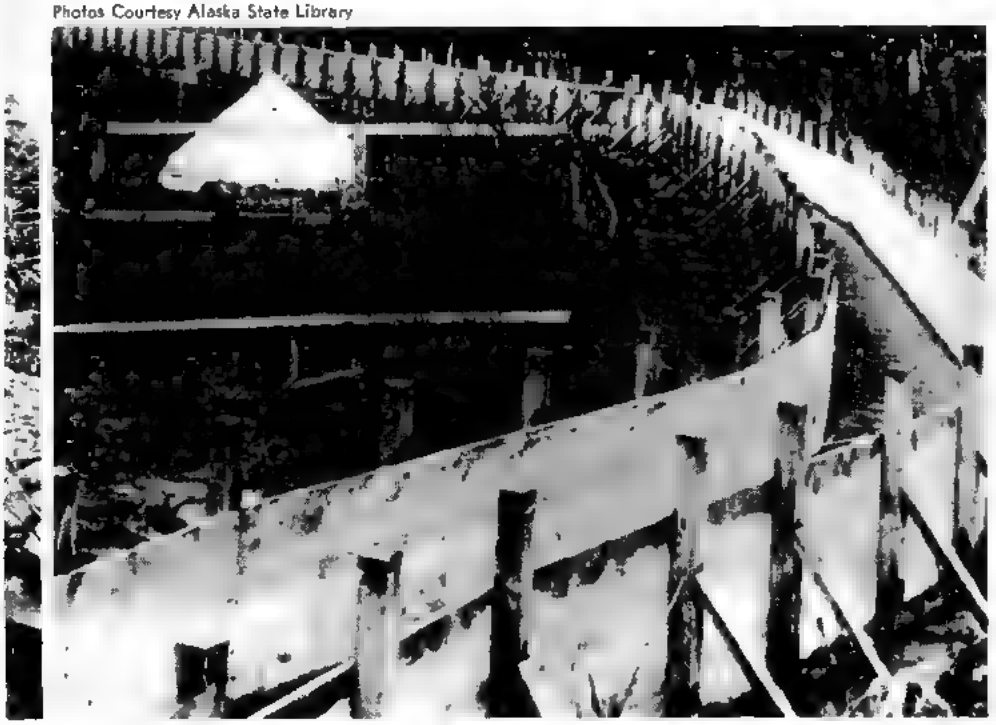


Top: Flume to convey water from the dam to the site of mining operations. Lower: The wing dam shows hemlock logs and boulders as they were used at Crow Creek.

we had had nothing to do and, barring that stinking steerage, the whole trip had been a picnic. But the honeymoon was over. We were each given a shovel; the team which had wintered at Girdwood was hitched to a sled containing the cook and a load of supplies and we headed up the trail. After we left the opening where the few cabins were that made up the place, we entered the timber. Then we found what the shovels were for. There was about three feet of snow to be removed from the several miles of road which lay between us and the camp, rest, and food, and when we finally reached the place all hands were in a state of collapse. We had arrived at Crow Creek.

ONE of the first jobs we had was building a bulkhead to crowd the creek over on one side where it would be out of the way of operations. This was accomplished by laying up a double row of hemlock logs, filling in between with frozen tufts of bog moss, and then weighting the whole thing down with boulders. In the summer the rain and melting snow raised the creek to flood levels, and it required heavy construction to hold it. Crowding it over to one side made it possible to sluice out the old channel and leave the creek up on the bank out of the way.

The pay was down thirty or forty feet in the bottom of the cut, which was simply a gash, ground out of the solid rock and filled with gravel. Sluicing, or washing, the gravel out of this old channel by means of the "giant" (a 6" nozzle on the end of a pipe about 10' long) and forcing it down through the flume over gold-saving riffles and on over the dump, or tailing pile, constituted the mining operation at Crow Creek. Everything else that was done around there had as its objective the assisting and speeding up of this operation.

But before the flume was finished, another piece of hard luck came along. The sides of the old channel containing the pay were fairly straight and even. It had been an ancient box canyon—now filled and covered over—and the bulkhead was built to rest on the bank of this old canyon, holding the creek back from sluicing operations while the canyon was washed out clean. But at one point the bank bent in sharply and out again so that when sluicing operations passed, a column of gravel was left under the bulkhead at that point. Work was being rushed on the new flume to get the creek out of the way as quickly as possible, but in the meantime mining had to go on in order to meet expenses.

One day found the cleanup not quite finished, and the sluice boxes set up in the big flume used for the cleanup were left with a man to guard them till morning. At this point we must list one more hazard to the almost limitless uncertainties of gold mining. That column of gravel underneath the bulkhead holding back the creek would probably have stood there all summer, but—

The Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes lay out to the westward and we were in line with all the volcanoes of the Aleutians. I had talked with men who were down there during those eruptions and one said he was so terrified that he lay down and hung onto the grass. Well, the very night that Dawson, owner of the mine, decided to wait till morning to finish his cleanup, Alaska yawned, shook herself, and went back to sleep. The earthquake knocked down said pillar of gravel, and the whole creek came pouring down into the cut, carrying sluice boxes, cleanup, and all down over the tailings. Obviously it was very poor judgment to leave the cleanup down there under that gravel—earthquake or no earthquake—but I am merely recording what happened. Gold miners are notorious for taking risks, but this one was seemingly inexcusable since the mining was finished and all that remained to be done was to put the stuff in the safe.

TO ME, the job on the tailing pile was the most fun at the mine. As the big boulders were washed down the flume, they gradually built up into a huge sloping pile that extended out into the canyon. When it became impossible to keep the end clear, the flume would be built out another few feet and then for awhile the man on the dump would have

(Continued on page 46)

DOUBLE HANGI

By LILY CASEY KLASNER submitted by EVE BALL

Illustrations by Al Martin Napolotano

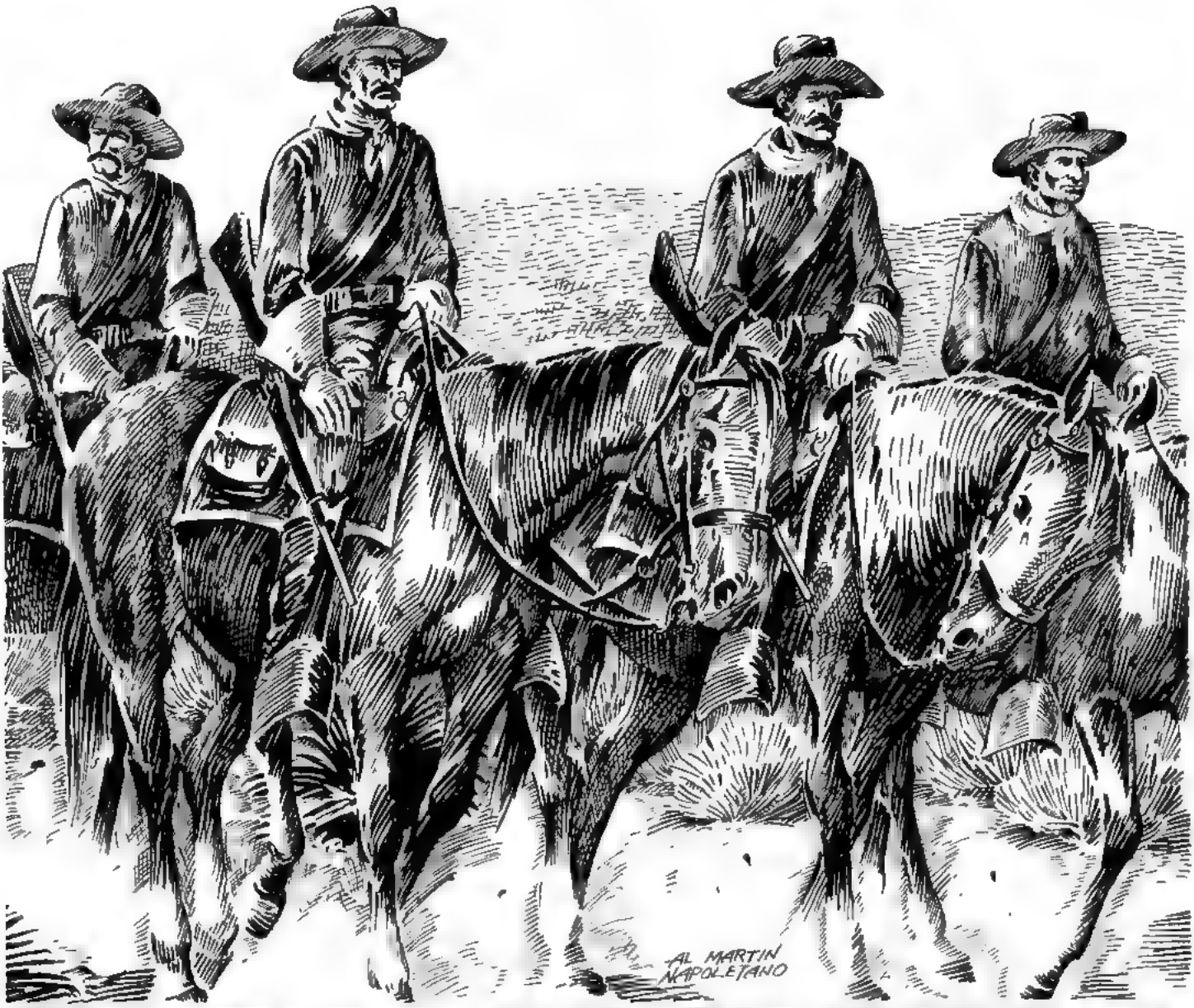
Explanatory note: Lily Klasner's account of the death of her father, Robert Casey, and the execution of his murderer was written almost fifty years ago. In October 1968 the manuscript was found in an old trunk in an abandoned adobe house on one of the Casey ranches. Mrs. Klasner had left the trunk and its contents to her niece, Mrs. Ola Casey Jones. Seemingly several attempts had been made to prepare the manuscript for publication but were not completed. No finished chapter was found. Mrs. Klasner had written with pencil on "Big Chief" tablets such as were used by pupils in elementary schools.

When I edited the manuscript, I used—as written—some of the chapters previously prepared by Maurice Garland Fulton. But primarily this story is in Mrs. Klasner's own words.

Lily Klasner, nee Casey, was thirteen years of age at the time of her father's death. She was taken to Lincoln, New Mexico, to care for her infant brother, John, while her mother attended the trial of William Wilson, the accused. The baby gave little trouble and Lily attended court and heard much of the evidence. She did not witness the hanging, but heard Captain Fechet tell her mother of what occurred on the scaffold.

Like her account of Bob Olinger, Lily Casey Klasner's version of what transpired on the scaffold does not coincide with that given by historians. But the Casey family believed the young officer's description to be true.

At thirteen years of age, fatherless Lily Casey became the defender of her mother, the family home, and their property. One of her brothers was partially paralyzed and the other was described at that time as being "puny." So Lily, the youngest of the three, became the most formidable of the group. She could ride, rope, brand, and shoot as well as any man. And that is saying a great deal, for Lincoln County was noted for the marksmanship not only of its outlaws, but of its reputable citizens. Jim Sutherland,



NG AT LINCOLN

A daughter writes of her father's murder and of its traumatic aftermath

manager of the famous Diamond A, is quoted as having said: "In this altitude pneumonia is nearly always fatal. There is just on thing I fear more, and that is Lil Casey." This is her story.—Eve Ball.

IN the summer of 1867 dissatisfaction with the general control of politics in Lincoln County by the Murphy ring reached a crisis. By that time there were a good many more Americans in the country than before, and they were eager to do something to break the grip Murphy and his followers had on the country. A sort of general agreement was reached among the Americans that at the political convention to be held sometime in the summer, a strong effort should be made to put some good men into various county offices.

As the county was altogether Democratic, there was no likelihood of a ticket made up of Republicans being brought forward. So the whole success of this scheme to down the Murphy aggregation depended on the Democrats' putting forth nominees who were not under Murphy's control.

The day before the convention was to meet, Colonel Micky Cronin, an ex-Army officer who had settled in Lincoln, came down to our house and spent the night. The object of his visit was to persuade Father to go to Lincoln and attend the convention. Colonel Cronin explained that Father's presence was especially desired because of his prominence and influence in the county. At first Father tried to beg off from going. Mother, too, was strongly opposed to the idea. They both felt that any efforts to shake the grip of the Murphy ring, which Colonel Cronin urged upon Father as the prime need for his going, would be fraught with danger to those who were responsible for the move or who participated prominently in it. Father was disinclined to incur any enmity from the Murphy crowd, for he well enough knew the ruthlessness of their methods in getting even with those against whom they held a grudge. But

Colonel Cronin was insistent, and finally Father consented to go up with him the next day.

Early the next morning they set out for Lincoln, a young man, Edmond Welch, who was then the clerk of our store, going along with them. Father hoped to return the same day for he did not want Mother to have to assume the extra care of having to look after the store, which she would have to do in the absence of both himself and Edmond Welch. When Father said goodbye to Mother, he told her that he would start back home from Lincoln as early as possible in the afternoon.

The convention met on Sunday, August 2. It may seem somewhat strange that a Sunday should be selected as the time for such a meeting, but as there was no preaching whatever anywhere in the whole county to interfere with it, Sunday seemed a suitable time of the week. Another point in its favor was that the farmers would be able to come to the county seat without losing a work day. That, of course, was important.

After Father left, we children went on to our nearest neighbors, the Lloyds, expecting to spend the greater part of the day. We had a hilarious time playing with their son Dick who, although older than we, did not hesitate about entering into our games. But about the middle of the afternoon a dark shadow was cast over our merriment. Edmond Welch rode up, his horse plainly showing that he had been ridden hard, and the young man himself was evidently under the greatest excitement. He brought the dreadful news that Father had been shot about two o'clock that afternoon in Lincoln and was badly wounded. Young as we were, we children had heard of killings so frequently that we were inclined to take them as everyday events, but this time when it was our own dear father who was the victim—we could not help feeling differently about it.

Edmond Welch did not stay to give us further particulars, but hurried on down to our house to carry the terrible news to Mother. Mrs. Lloyd realized that we should get home at once, and having a wagon hitched up she took us as rapidly as she could drive over the mile that separated the Lloyd place and ours.

WHEN we reached home, we found Mother all ready to start for Lincoln. She had had the best team on the place hitched to our hack. She told us children that she did not think it best for us to go along, as we could not do anything, and said we should stay at home until she came back. Mrs. Lloyd agreed to come to our house and look after us, and Mother felt sure we would be well taken care of.

Mother afterward told me that she had made Edmond Welch drive the team in a high lope every foot of the way, when the road was free enough from rocks to make such rapid driving safe. She covered the distance to Lincoln in a remarkably short length of time, and I am sure she risked her own safety more than once on the trip in her determination to get to Father's side as soon as possible.

When she arrived in Lincoln, she found that friends had taken Father into Steve Stanley's house, and had done everything that could be done to make him comfortable and to save his life if that were possible. William Wilson, who had done the shooting, was under arrest, although there had been such a strong feeling against him among Father's friends for the cowardly way he had done the shooting that he had narrowly escaped being lynched. Milder counsel, however, prevailed, and he was left in the hands of the law.

Father's friends were reconciled to this course because men of the Army who were in Lincoln that day declared that Wilson would most certainly be kept in safekeeping until the next term of court. This seemed to guarantee that Wilson would be held until his trial, although everyone knew that if he were placed in the jail at Lincoln he would in all likelihood make his escape.

Captain James Randlett, Captain Fechet, and the commanding officer of Fort Stanton were warm personal friends of Father's. They appreciated the service he had rendered to the Army both while in it as a soldier and afterwards as a scout in the Indian campaigns. For these

(Continued on page 80)

Readers' letters for "Trails Grown Dim" are printed as soon as space permits, so please be patient! If possible, please type your query; or if handwritten, print or write clearly, especially names, dates, and places—and most of all, please be brief. In accord with the content of our magazines and purpose of this service since its beginning, preference is given writers whose trails have grown dim out West: lost ancestors and relatives who were sheriffs, pioneers, Forty-niners, mulcskinners, cowboys, Indians and Indian fighters, and so on. We can't run current "missing persons" notices or lengthy genealogical requests, but we do attempt to print all letters as soon as we can. Any reader having information concerning persons referred to below is asked to communicate directly with the letter writer; please do not write to us.

Payne

Can someone give me any information about a Payne family (John, Mary, and thirteen children) who lived on a plantation near Marietta, Georgia before and during the Civil War? I do not know how long they remained there after the close of the war. John, a Confederate soldier, was never heard of after the battle of Lookout Mountain, in which he was known to have fought. Whether he was killed, or deserted his family, was never known. My father, Harvey Payne, fought in that same war and that he was in the Union Army was certain, as in middle-age he drew a service pension. He seems also to have fought under General Phil Sheridan.

The names of the children, of whom there were three sets of twins that I remember are: Artimissa and Desdamona—probably twins; Lovey and Dovey—twins; Frank; Clinton and Clayton—twins; my father Harvey who was born near Marietta, Georgia June 6, 1843 and died June 30, 1920, probably in Texas; and Ellender.

At one time, in the early history of the John Payne family, or possibly an earlier generation, there must have been two brothers in Georgia. Two male Payne cousins entered the same college at the same time. There was so much confusion about college records and so on that they decided one would write his name "Paine." My father was of the Payne branch. Thank you for any information.—Clara M. Grove, 428 East 7th, Moscow, Idaho 83843

Gardner

I am seeking information about DeWitt H. Gardner who lived around Silver City, New Mexico and Clifton, Arizona from 1914 to 1920. He was born in South Vineland, New Jersey in 1886, the son of Theodore and Fannie Gardner and grandson of William H. and Hannah Finn Gardner who were originally from New York State. He had a brother Sidney.

Would like to hear from any friends, acquaintances, relatives or anyone who has any information about him or his family.—Mrs. Louise Russell, Box 269, Leesburg, New Jersey 08327

Markham-Rider-Harper-Ruth

My great-grandmother, Rebecca Markham, was born September 18, 1817. She was the third of six children: Richard, born January 8, 1814; Mary, born May 19, 1815; Mariah, born May 5, 1820; William, born July 5, 1822; Elizabeth, born November 4, 1823. I don't know who their parents were or where they were born.

On April 1, 1838 Lewis Rider of Naples, Scott County, Illinois, blacksmith, married Rebecca Markham, spinster. They were married by Mr. Pittman. Lewis Rider died at Naples, Illinois on September 1, 1838. Their daughter, my grandmother, was born at Naples on January 29, 1839. She was named Sophia Elisabeth Rider and was baptized May 19, 1839 by John Derby Spenser.

Near Naples, Illinois, on August 21, 1840 Cassander, consort of William Harper, died at age thirty-five. Near Exeter, Illinois, Mary Ann Harper, daughter of William and Cassander Harper, died at age five months, four days. There is no date for the baby's death. Was there a relationship between Cassander and the Markhams? I wonder, as their deaths are listed in Grandma's Bible.

William Harper and Rebecca Rider were married on April 17, 1841 and through the years had nine children: Mary Ann, born April 18, 1842; Mariah Jane, August 30, 1844; William Henry, May, 1843; Charles Franklin, May 6, 1846; Lewis R., February 5, 1848; Richard, November 12, 1849; George, May 28, 1851; Christeny, July 1, 1853; and George, September 17, 1855. Of these boys, I believe, some served with the Union in the Civil War and one was imprisoned at Libby and either escaped or attempted to escape.

Rebecca Markham Rider Harper died near Pittsfield, Illinois on February 20, 1859. She left quite a family of young children and I keep wondering what happened to that family. Her first daughter, Sophia Elisabeth, married Andrew Ruth on December 13, 1855. I don't know where but it was probably in the Scott County, Illinois area. Their first child, Lewis, born September 5, 1856, died September 20, 1857.

Andrew Ruth was a native of Ohio, of German descent, and son of William Ruth and Jane Line Ruth. He had a brother Silas. Andrew was born, as I figure it, on October 17, 1832. Andrew and Sophia Ruth had another son, William, born November 20, 1858 in the Naples area and sometime after that left for California as their third child, Frances, was born en route on June 20, 1861. I believe they were part of a wagontrain that came into southern California, as William and Jane and Silas and Silas' family, if he had one at the time, settled in the southern part of California. Andrew and Sophia Ruth kept moving north and settled for a time at Linden, California where two of their children are buried. The Bible entries get quite sketchy here and another child must have been born and died in the Linden area between 1862 and 1867. Otherwise it just doesn't add up right. My mother was the youngest of their children, born at Comptche, Mendocino County, California on February 18, 1874. Later the family moved to Shasta County and Mom taught school in the Round Mountain, Montgomery Creek area until she and my father were married on February 4, 1901.

If any readers have information on these folks I'd enjoy hearing from them. Life must have been full of hardships, and reading between the lines of Grandma's Bible is just about driving me wild with curiosity.—Mrs. Florence Stephen, Box 279, Armstrong, B. C., Canada

Stringer

Am anxious to find out the names and dates (presumably in the middle-1800s) of the arrival into the United States or Canada of the descendants of John and Mary Stringer, born around 1812 and who supposedly lived in Little Sutton, England. We have subscribed to your magazine for many years and know it is read in many countries so if there are any Stringers who read this magazine, please write to us.—Ervin T. Stringer, Box 47, Medicine Lake, Montana 59247

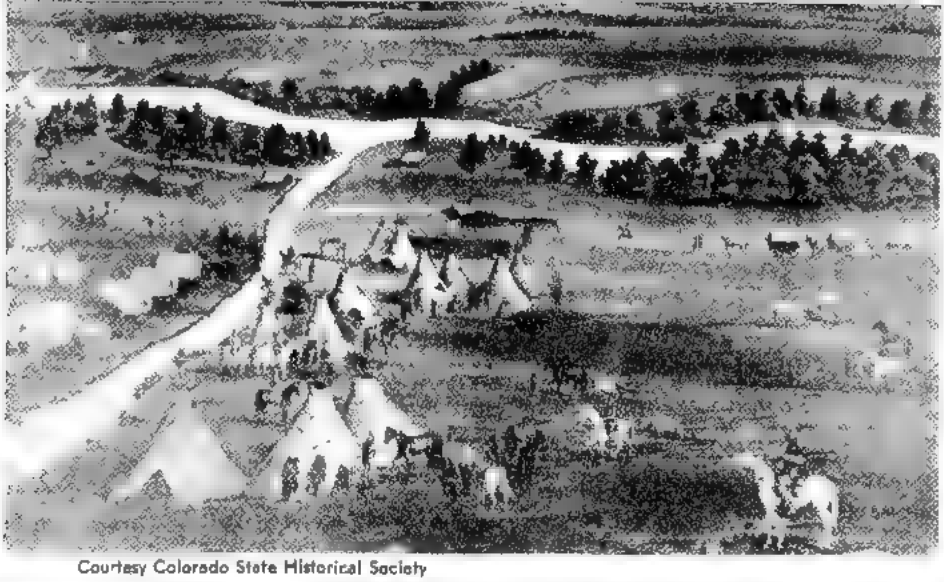
Jobe-Mears

Wish to correspond with any descendants or anyone who can give me information on Lourana Jobe (maiden name). Believe her first marriage was to Hall, second to Jones, and third to a J. R. Stubblefield. She was born about 1857 in Jobe Township, Oregon County, Missouri near Alton, Missouri. Came to Texas around 1878 to Collin County, Texas near the community of Old Lebanon, and had several children. Last heard she went west, probably around Taos, New Mexico. Relatives have letters postmarked in the '20s. She corresponded with my aunt Ina (Jobe) Standlee who lived around Wilbarger County, Texas. She is now deceased and her children live at Seymour, Texas.

Cynthia (Jobe) Cook is buried at San Angelo; my husband's grandfather, Caleb Jobe, and wife Martha Emily (Brewer) are buried at the Thalia Cemetery in Foard County, Texas. Lourana had a sister Hester (born about 1852); Sarah (born about December 1859); and Elisha (born about 1864). Her father was Elijah Jobe and her mother was named Mary. Am trying to find out if Elijah Jobe or her mother had a sister named Elizabeth (born about 1855). Would like to know whom Hester and Elizabeth married.

Elisha Jobe when last heard from had gone to Petersburg, Texas. Where is his grave and what year did he die? It is said that he and his sister Sarah never married. Sarah went to West Texas with Lourana and lived near her. Would like to hear from anyone who knows any information about these people. Elijah Jobe raised my grandfather, Caleb Jobe, from a boy, as his parents died when he was a

(Continued on page 58)



Courtesy Colorado State Historical Society

Above left: Denver, on Cherry Creek, as it looked when the Rogers party came through headed for California. Above right: Mt. Holy Cross was visible from what became Lost Slate Mountain.

Slate Mountain's

By MAURICE KILDARE

Photos Courtesy Author

THE summer of 1849 a man known only as "Buck" Rogers arrived in Cherry Creek (Denver), Colorado with thirty men from Bloomington, Illinois. They were headed for the California goldfields.

Somewhere between 100 and 150 miles west of the Cherry Creek diggings, they camped overnight on a small stream, and some of them panned gravel while waiting for supper. They found gold. Rogers and five of the party elected to remain on the creek; the rest continued on to California.

The source of the gold was traced to a gulch where a thin vein in a ledge yielded nuggets from a form of conglomerate. The men tunneled under a mountain slope, following the pay vein which widened perceptibly for the next hundred feet. It then flowered out abruptly, so they cut a drift and hit the "richest kind of ore," as it was later described by Rogers. As fast as the gold was recovered it was stored in the main tunnel.

By the time the first snowflakes of winter fell the men had accumulated between $250,000 and $400,000 in gold, or so Rogers estimated. This meant a small fortune for each of them but they were hungry for even more. Though their supplies were so low they were subsisting on unsalted wild meat, no one wanted to leave. It was decided to send Rogers out to the nearest place where grub could be obtained.

Given about $500 in nuggets he set forth riding one mule and taking two others to pack in the supplies. After a day's travel a heavy snowstorm blew down out of the Rockies. In what was later named Tennessee Pass a howling blizzard holed Rogers up for six days. His jerky ran out. As soon as possible he went on, reaching a camp never identified in his personal accounts of the incident. A second storm hurled down there, with heavy snowfall that lasted two weeks.

Instead of immediately buying supplies, Rogers began drinking and gambling. In a very short time he was broke and had to sell the two pack mules. Thereafter he swamped saloons and became a general all-around camp bum.

When the early days of spring warmed the land, Rogers sobered up enough to realize the enormity of his breach of trust. As soon as he could get together a small amount of grub, he started back.

After five days on the trail, Rogers arrived at the mine which had been dug back into a mountain often referred to as Slate Mountain. On reaching the creek and riding up it to where he and his companions had panned the first gold, he halted in sheer astonishment. A terrific avalanche of snow and ice had come down the mountainside, bringing with it a mass of great rocks and shearing the timber all the way into the creek. Part of the debris had spilled across the stream but running water had cut through and cleared the channel.

The gulch in which the tunnel had been bored was completely filled, and half the mountain seemed to cover it. Only a rounded dome remained of the part that he wanted to reach. The great slide had exposed deep beds of dark slate.

Horrified, and filled with remorse, Rogers hastened to the nearest mining camp. Miners were a clannish lot when calamity struck. More than twenty pooled their resources and returned with him to the scene of the avalanche.

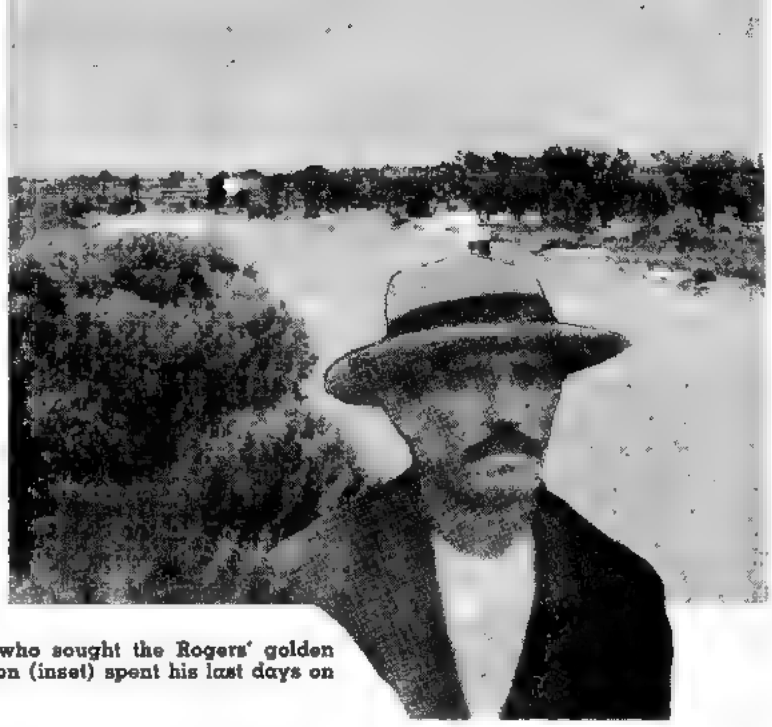
For nearly a month they cut down shafts where Rogers estimated the camp and mine tunnel should be. After repeated failures the miners informed Rogers that there was no use trying longer. The deeper the shafts progressed, the greater the risk of cave-ins. Only two men were able to work in them at a time. A sudden spill would engulf them without a chance of rescue.

The Denver *Republican* in recounting the history of the case, May 8, 1892, reported that five men—Rogers' companions—had to be left in their rockbound crypt and rest there today.

ROGERS appears to have been so overcome with guilt that he became sullen and on the defensive if any mention was made to him of Slate Mountain. Several times he tried prospecting but failed; his last days were spent drifting from one Colorado mining camp to another.

In 1881, struck down by a fatal illness, he was taken in by a Negress in Denver, Ossie Jones. Knowing that he was dying, Rogers gave her a small pocket notebook in which was a map to the avalanche-covered mine. Just what she did with the book has been in dispute all the years since.

The next man who became intensely interested in Slate Mountain's gold-laden tunnel was Arthur H. Fulford. He owned a ranch and maintained a stage station at the north end of Brush Creek (then called Camp Fulford and later to become



Courtesy Denver Public Library

Above left: Denver when it was the jumping-off point for all those who sought the Rogers' golden tunnel. Above right: The San Juan River Valley where Alfred Ellington (inset) spent his last days on a farm.

the town of Fulford). For two or three years he was also town marshal of Red Cliff, located a few miles from his ranch.

One summer day in 1886 two men arrived by stagecoach. They made a deal with Fulford to rent riding stock, and departed packing supplies up Brush Creek. Several days later they returned, paid Fulford, and boarded an eastbound stagecoach.

The same two men came back in the spring of 1887. Again they rented stock and went up the creek. For a third time they followed the same procedure. After that trip neither of them ever returned.

In 1891 Fulford met a prospector at Red Cliff who said that he had a map and explicit directions to a lost and avalanche-covered mine of fabulous value. He declared he owned the notebook given Ossie Jones by the dying Rogers. It had come into his possession in 1887, according to his story. Thereafter he had searched diligently and eventually had located the right mountain. Into the bare rock of the avalanche slide he put down a shaft, directly into the old tunnel made by Rogers' men. In it he found rusted iron tools and several skeletons. In the drift he came onto a pile of gold nuggets; the dust was contained in deerskin bags. The prospector worked his way down through a space so small he had to descend and crawl back up like a mole. Unable to bring out much gold, he was seeking help in widening the entrance.

When told all this, Fulford was extremely skeptical until he recalled the strangers' mysterious visits a few years before. It was then that he realized they had been looking for the same gold-laden tunnel.

When the old prospector showed him a buckskin pouch of nuggets, Fulford agreed to help him and secured two other men to go with them. Then came a frustrating delay. The old prospector had plenty of gold which he kept exchanging at the saloons for money, and seemed in no hurry at all. Time after time he put Fulford off "for a few days longer."

One night—as a bystander in a saloon fight—the old man was shot and killed. Fulford, in his official capacity as marshal, went to the shack where the prospector had been staying to collect his few sorry possessions. Among them was the Rogers notebook.

The matter was discussed with a mine operator at Aspen who agreed to finance an attempt to locate the tunnel into Slate Mountain.

OUTFITTING in September, Fulford went up Brush Creek without waiting for the others to join him. It was later believed that he found the tunnel which by then was termed Rogers' Lost Mine. Another prospecting party reported having visited Fulford in a gulch off the creek. He showed them a sack of gold nuggets which they estimated weighed about thirty pounds.

Terrific snowstorms and blizzards swirled down early that year. Fulford's body was found frozen solid in a snowbank on a slope of New York Mountain, quite a few miles from the lost Slate. Among his effects were more than thirty pounds of coarse gold. Mrs. Fulford received the nuggets, along with the news of her husband's death, on New Years Day, 1892. Friends of the deceased made up a party and went to New York Mountain to recover his body and bring it out for burial, but after three weeks searching they failed to find it.

The Denver *Republican* account of the Rogers gold tunnel also stated that in 1890 an Irish prospector had reached Denver with a lot of coarse gold, very little of which was exchanged for spending money except for twenty pounds swapped to a friendly bartender. The latter was informed that the gold came from Slate Mountain. The unnamed Irishman had gone there with a partner, looking for the tunnel. Not only did they find it but dug down to the gold. The Irishman said he brought out a mere pittance compared to the pile they found deep under the slide that entombed Rogers' five companions from Illinois.

But after taking out what they did, the two men got into a heated argument as to how they would share their find. The Irishman's partner declared that having furnished the necessary information he was entitled to and demanded seventy-five per cent. The same ratio would hold true when they returned with better equipment and more help to retrieve the rest of the underground fortune. The argument ended in the Irishman's shooting and killing his partner.

The bartender agreed to side him for a try at recovering the gold for a small percentage—and appears not to have been the least uneasy over the fact that the man had already killed one partner.

Over drinks the Irishman gave a complete description of how to reach the Slate Mountain tunnel. There was, he

(Continued on page 54)

GOLDEN Tunnel

BULLY of the TOWN

By ALEX WILLIAMS

Photos Courtesy Author

Illustration from Faces of the Frontier, by Lorence F. Bjorklund, Dodd, Mead & Company, Inc. Publisher, New York

The only thing he was ever a success at was looking for trouble—but how he did shine at that!

ALONG toward dusk on September 12, 1877, a handsome young man rode into the frontier town of Denton, Texas. He stabled his horse at Work Brothers' on the east side of the square and walked the half block to the Lacy House. He was fortunate in securing a room and gave the name John M. Patrick, but did not record his home town or destination. The Lacy House, on the northeast corner of the square, was operated by Colonel and Mrs. C. C. Lacy and was usually crowded because of its open hospitality and excellent food.

On the same day, a young tramp printer arrived in town and promptly landed a job with Judge Tom Hogg at the Monitor Book and Job Printing Company. He worked late that night, then went to the Lacy House hoping to secure a room. Tom Gerren, a local deputy sheriff who had no family, kept a room at the Lacy House with the understanding that it could be rented when he was out of town. Colonel Lacy, thinking the deputy was away, let the printer have the room in accordance with the arrangement he and Gerren had made.

Shortly after midnight, after all of the occupants had retired, Gerren walked in and went upstairs to his part-time room. When he discovered the stranger in his bed asleep, he erupted into a towering rage, jerked the youngster to the floor, cursed him, stomped him, and kicked him down the stairs.

At breakfast the next morning, John Patrick stated—in a very frank and open way for all to hear—his thoughts on the disgraceful happening of the night before, and added that he would have liked very much to have been in that room when Gerren came in. The deputy jumped up from the breakfast table and went to the front porch where he was waiting when Patrick came out to get his horse.

Gerren drew his pistol, barred Patrick's way, and started cursing him. Patrick, though unarmed, jumped Gerren and in the struggle the pistol was fired twice. Gerren broke off the engagement by fleeing to the safety of his second-floor room. Patrick threw the gun down, strolled over to the stable for his horse, and rode at a slow gait north on the Pilot Point road. As he passed the Lacy House Gerren fired at him twice with a rifle but failed to score.

A citizen, flustered and with no real knowledge of the morning's events, set up a yell that the rider heading north had murdered Tom Gerren. This caused no undue excitement among most of the men who were on the streets, many of whom had experienced at one time or another some form of physical or mental mistreatment at the hands of the overbearing deputy. A very small posse, its limited members clearly pointing up the bully's unpopularity, took the road after the "murderer" as they mistakenly thought of Patrick.

Across the road west of the present Texas Woman's University archery court,

ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Dave Ware, a hand on the Daugherty farm, was repairing a rail fence. He heard shots and looked down the road to see a lone horseman with several other riders in pursuit. Running to the barn, he secured a rifle and hid under the fence. After Patrick had passed, Ware shot him in the back "where his suspenders crossed," as he later boasted. Patrick turned east and rode into the timber where he was discovered leaning against a tree. His valiant pursuers riddled the already dying man. Dick Cobb, who was an undertaker at that time, counted twenty-one wounds in the body.

When the posse returned triumphantly to town, the men learned that Gerren had not even been scratched. A sense of utmost shame prevailed for many months to come. All of Denton's best citizens contributed freely to assure Patrick a handsome burial in City Cemetery. Communications being what they were, it was months before inquiries established that John Patrick was in fact a near kinsman of Captain S. W. and Mr. C. W. Merchant, prominent citizens of Pilot Point, and son of the well known ranching family in far west Texas. He was on his way to visit the Pilot Point relatives with a view of making Denton County his home when he was murdered due to the actions of the bully of the town. Rest in peace, John Patrick.

AN angry crowd had formed by mid-morning, ringing W. F. Egan's office. Sheriff Egan was a highly respected man. He had been out of town for several days, but was due back. Egan's lot was not an easy one since the county allowed such meager pay for deputies that he could not always attract good, capable men to his staff. One case especially points up this situation.

W. R. Wetsel, another deputy, was dispatched to collect overdue taxes in the northwest area. He managed to collect $15, then stopped in the village of Bolivar to water his horse and rest a bit. He was invited to sit in on a game of Schneck's Favorite, which he did. This was an error in judgment, for the Bolivar boys took him for all he had, including the tax money. An honest man, Wetsel reported what had happened; Sheriff Egan, also an honest man, promptly paid the county out of his own pocket. Wetsel's salary, being what it was, made repayment most difficult. Egan was forced to accept $1.50 per month till Wetsel's debt was paid.

This, then, was the situation the lawman faced when he rode up to the crowd gathered in front of his office. A spokesman told him of the disgraceful events earlier that morning, and demanded immediate dismissal of Gerren. The sheriff agreed that this would be proper, and asked the citizens to nominate a good man to take over the job. One, two, three nominations were made, and as promptly turned down by each nominee. The crowd, convinced that they had far underestimated the sheriff's difficulties, slowly broke and returned to their various businesses. Egan's problem was left to him.

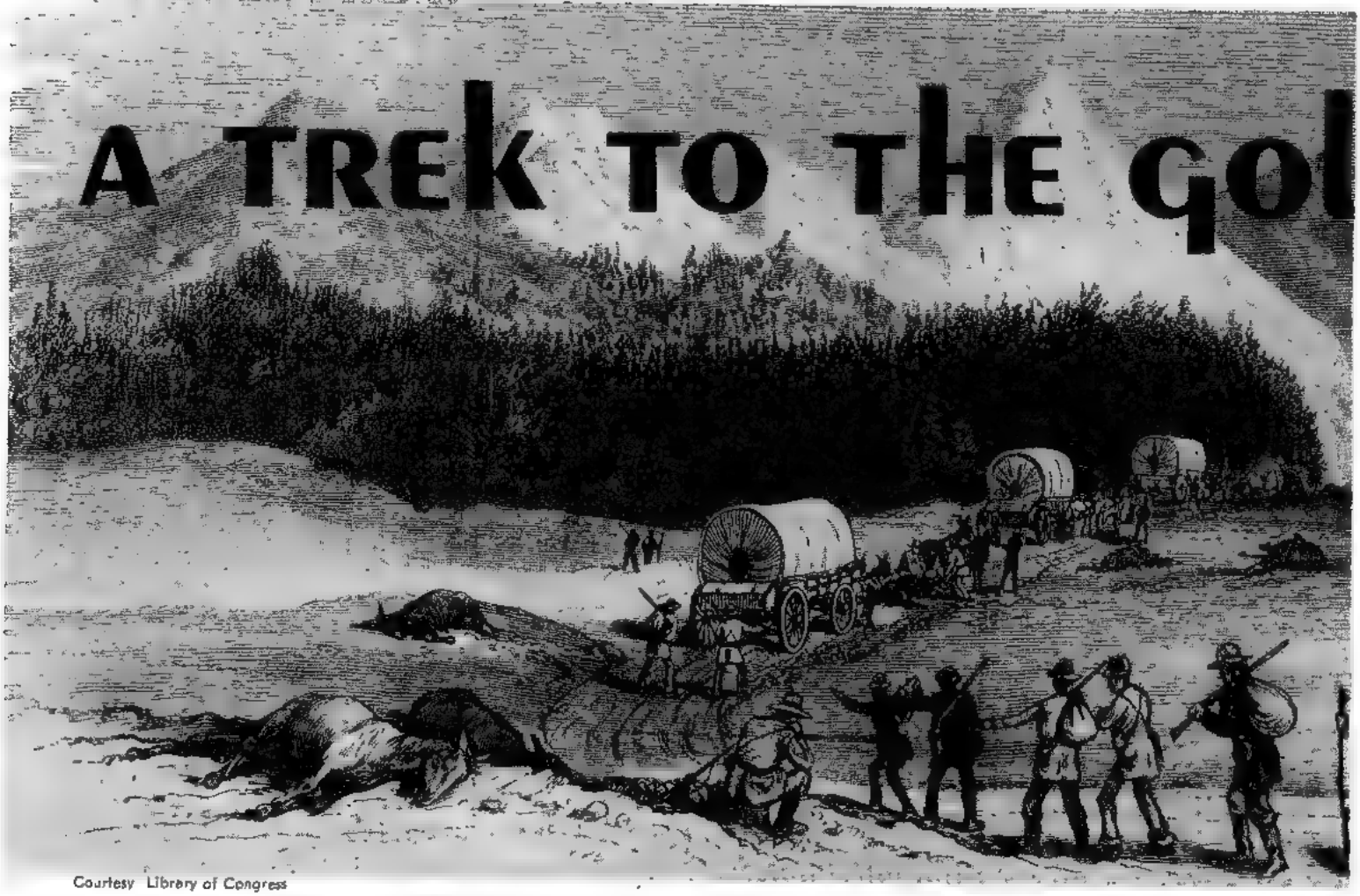
Reassured, Gerren resumed his campaign to become known as the toughest, most-fearless gunman in the state, maybe in the world. He was also somewhat of a Dandy Dan and a picture taken in 1877 bore this out. As was his practice, he never paid a local merchant, B. Greenlee, a penny on his special orders. Greenlee, like many other businessmen, did not consider it prudent to attempt collection.

Most of Gerren's doings were kept from Sheriff Egan because of the victims' fear of swift retaliation. But all good things must come to an end, and Gerren's lucrative set-up was no exception. On Thanksgiving Eve of 1878 a goodly crowd was celebrating in Craddock's Bar on the south side of the square. Craddock's was a highly respectable spot which tolerated no untoward conduct, a place where the best citizens met for short beers and long discussions on current topics. This night was no different from any other until Gerren entered and stood at the long mahogany where he ordered whiskey. After downing several straight shots, he proceeded to address the man standing next to him, stating among other things that he was an officer who took no lip from any man, especially stragglers and tramps passing through Denton. The stranger seemed indifferent to the insults, which merely added to Gerren's

(Continued on page 41)

Below, top: Elaborate fieldstone, tent-shaped cover over Patrick's grave erected by shamed Denton citizens. Middle: The original Mary Shea (Shay) house after it was moved several blocks southwest by the late Bud Duncan. Two rooms and weatherboard were added. Bottom: Headstone of Billy Baines, killed in the train robbery plot.

A TREK TO THE GOL



Courtesy Library of Congress

From a booklet by WASHINGTON ("WASH") BAILEY, written in 1915 and adapted by MRS. HOMER ETHERTON, 1966. Courtesy Leroy (Illinois) Journal

JOSHUA BAILEY, Washington Bailey's uncle, had made a fortune mining gold in California. In 1853 he came East to visit his mother and two brothers, John and Eben Bailey, the latter being Washington's father.

Joshua Bailey fascinated Eben's two young sons, Washington and Crawford, who decided to return West with him. Three cousins; Washington's brother-in-law, William Reighley; and another man, Bart Robins, would accompany them. Joshua had bought a span of mules and some harness in Adams County, Ohio, and decided to send Reighley to buy 1,500 sheep, 250 head of cattle, and the feed needed on the long journey.

From a carpet satchel lined with buckskin, Joshua poured out a pile of gold coins. This astonished the nephews more than ever. He had gone to California in '49 and told them he had amassed a fortune of more than $100,000 in gold. So the few thousand he planned to use to buy livestock and supplies scarcely was missed. Washington's brother-in-law was to do the buying and was paid $50 for his work.

Joshua was well pleased with their judgment and left for Wisconsin to make arrangements to move his wife and children to California to make their home there with him.

Washington Bailey had rented some land and he had to dispose of that and his grain and equipment before he could leave. He and two other young men set out to catch up with one of the groups of travelers. When they reached Peoria after fording streams in many places, they thought it best to take a boat to St. Louis, then another to Independence, Missouri. Through some misunderstanding, it was several weeks before all groups found each other. Several were in Iowa, some with the livestock were in Kansas, and the others were ready to cross the Missouri at Kanesville (present-day Council Bluffs). The uncle, Joshua, and his family, together with some young men from Wisconsin and the herdsmen, the Bailey brothers, and their friends made up quite a large wagontrain.

While waiting near Kanesville, Iowa for the rest of the party, Joshua went to visit a farm out in the country. His horse was rather thin, so he staked him out where there was good grazing. Hiding his saddle in the tall grass some distance away he walked the rest of the way to see the farm.

Washington did not know where Joshua had gone, but seeing the latter's horse staked out, he went to investigate. Finding the saddle with a two-bushel sack tied to the saddle-horn, he opened the bag to discover a lot of gold coins. Fearing someone would steal the sack, he returned it to camp and hid it under some clothing in one of the wagons. Then he and his helper went to tend the stock. Supper was ready upon their return. Joshua had missed the sack, but Washington had forgotten about it until Joshua called out asking if anyone had seen it.

Washington told him he had seen it and would get it for him. On the way to the wagon, young Washington asked how much gold there was in the sack, and Joshua replied, "$36,000!" Joshua admitted that leaving the gold with the saddle was the most careless trick a man could do. (All wagontrains were in danger of prowlers.)

UPON REACHING the Missouri River the party found it too deep to be forded. Finally, a rough, homemade boat, caulked with buffalo tallow and loaded with furs, came down the river. Joshua made arrangements to use this man-oared boat as it might be a long time before a steamboat came along.

Crossing took two weeks of tedious labor. Sixteen head of cattle were all that could be taken at one time, and an island in the river made extra work. Each cargo had to be pulled and pushed upstream some distance because the strong current would carry toward the west bank far below the loading point. On the return trip, made in a similar manner, the boat was taken upstream and the current carried it south below the camp. There

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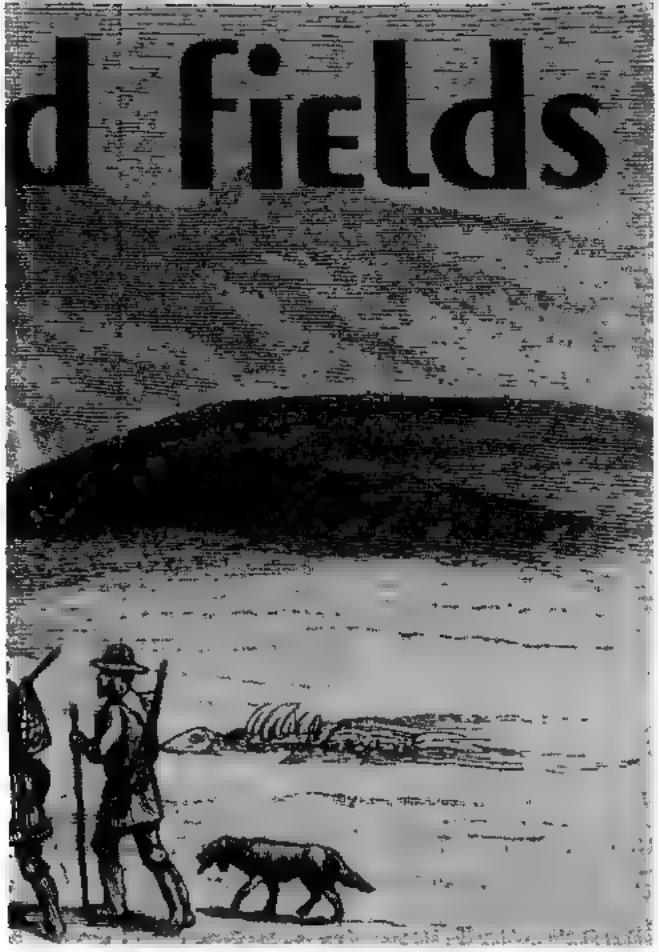
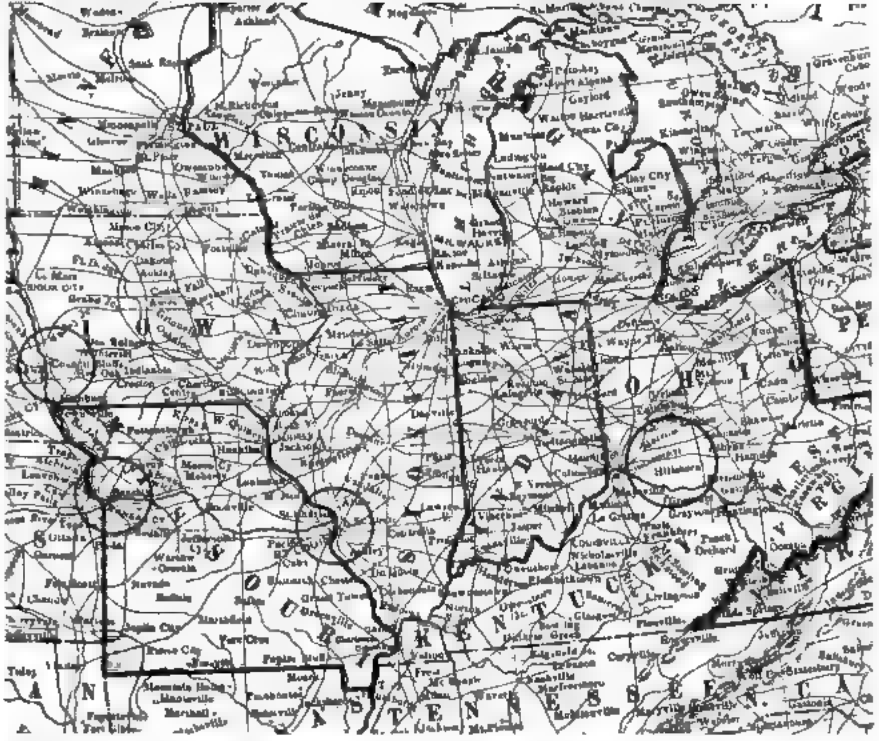




Left: Drawing of prospectors and emigrants crossing the mountains en route to Leadville shows how the Bailey wagontrain might have looked. Right: Map of areas (see circles) where they began their journey to California.

Maps from Crams Family Atlas of the World, 1888

Washington Bailey might have been green when he started, but he was a wise man when he returned, and a rich one, too!

was some feeling of gratitude because despite such a ramshackle outfit, no serious accidents had occurred and everything was crossed safely. Besides that, Joshua did not lose his money.

Having crossed the river, the party proceeded to a short distance north of where Omaha now is. The party was instructed to make plenty of bullets since Indians were everywhere and danger of an Indian attack always was at hand. The travelers arrived at Fort Kearny the Fourth of July and long before they reached the fort they could hear the roar of cannons in celebration.

Joshua Bailey crossed the Platte River on horseback and had quite a struggle with quicksand. He left his party on the other side and rode alone to Fort Kearny. There he learned that the Illinois wagontrain had passed through about two weeks before. Joshua took up the trail and after ten days overtook the train on the south side of the North Platte a short distance east of Fort Laramie near the Wyoming-Nebraska line at Ash Hollow. Here they forded the river.

All through Indian Territory were great herds of wild buffalo going north (in July). The herd leader kept the "V" of animals behind, while he was at the point of the "V". Drovers had to watch lest the buffalo droves cause the cattle to stampede. Herders kept the cattle in close formation, and by shooting off their guns and hallooing loudly, they were able to turn the buffalo away from the cattle.

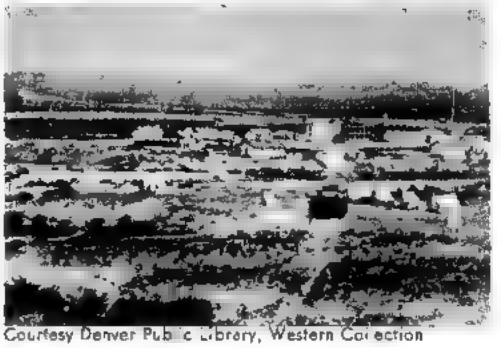
One day two Indians rode up on their spotted ponies while the party had stopped to let the livestock graze on good grass on a slope. The redskins dismounted, holding their ponies with a sort of lariat as they had no bridles. Bart Robins finally made the Indians understand he wished to ride one of the ponies. Some of the cattle were straying and Bart rode away to round them up. At first the Indians didn't care, but as Bart rode farther away they became uneasy and started after him, each with an arrow fixed to his bow. The Bailey men yelled as loud as they could, finally attracting Bart's attention, and motioned for him to return. By moving in a circle, he kept out of shooting distance and arrived back in camp safe—but a bit frightened! The Indians mounted their ponies and left.

Two or three days after the incident with the two Indians and their ponies, the camp was visited by a chief and twenty members of his tribe. After a long powwow, they sat down in a circle, the maneuver meaning they wanted as many men with Joshua Bailey to sit in a circle with them. The chief lit his pipe, took a puff, and passed it to Joshua to do likewise. Then Joshua handed the pipe back to the chief, who took another puff and handed it to the Indian seated next to him. He followed suit and handed it back to the chief. Following the ritual, after the chief had taken a puff, the pipe was given to Joshua who took a puff and handed it to the man next to him. This order was followed until each of the Indians and each of the Bailey men had a puff. When the last man handed back the pipe, the chief arose with great dignity and said, "How." Then, as solemnly as they had come, the Indians left. This was the "pipe of peace." It meant that the Indians would do no harm to the wagontrain and that the Bailey wagontrain people should not harm the Indians. This procedure evidently was felt necessary to clear up the pony incident.

A RULE of the camp was that there be no fighting or quarreling in the group. This rule was followed with most wagontrains. One day, however, an orphan boy in camp killed a buffalo, and the cook, a crabbed fellow, stepped in to show his authority. Since the lad was hungry and he had killed the buffalo, he helped himself to a piece of the meat although the cook had ordered him to leave it alone. This enraged the cook and he beat the lad until his face was black. Of course, the cook lost the respect of the camp.

Courtesy State Historical Society of Missouri

Courtesy Nebraska State Historical Society



Courtesy Denver Public Library, Western Collection

Top left: A drawing of Independence, Missouri as it probably looked when some of the Bailey party passed through. Middle (top): Fort Kearny, Nebraska and Fort Laramie, Wyoming (lower) were two of the places the Bailey wagontrain stopped. Top right: The Indians who powwowed with Joshua Bailey and his group might well have been Shoshone, such as those in "The War Party" by Charles Craig. Middle right: Three of the outstanding natural landmarks passed in their journey to California. Next: Map of the states in their route from Missouri. Lower right: Wagontrain photo taken in Wyoming depicts the Bailey train.

Alkali water isn't fit for cattle to drink, although it seldom harms sheep. Having received faulty instructions, the herders drove the stock to an alkali stream instead of away from it. Several head of cattle died as a result, but no sheep were lost. Counting the animals that had died and those that had been killed for meat, the party by that time had lost approximately 250 head of cattle.

In the herd were about forty or fifty milch cows, some of them fresh, so the wagontrain had plenty of milk. Most men in camp took turns milking the cows. One of the men couldn't milk a cow, so he made arrangements for doing chores for others who did know how.

That evening, when he held his cup out to the cook to fill it, the cook poured the milk on the ground and said, "No man who won't milk can drink milk." The man explained that he was exchanging chores with some of the other men and it was no concern of the cook. The cook's temper was riled. He hit the man in the stomach and knocked him down. In the fall the poor man's head struck a wagon wheel, cutting his scalp. The fight was ended, but the cook, victor in two struggles, was meaner than ever. The cook cut the bacon in such a manner that the family of Joshua could have the best slices. Mrs. Bailey spoke to the cook about this, but he told her to tend to her own business.

One night the train came into camp late. The next morning, two graves were found nearby and on a wagon endgate were cut the words, "Do not camp here." This must have been a place where Indians had molested some travelers. The graves not only were lined with large rocks but also were covered with stones to keep wolves from bothering the bodies. On one side the wolves had dug away the rocks, dragged out the bodies, and had picked the bones which lay nearby.

LEAVING the headwaters of the North Platte, the party soon came to the headwaters of the Sweetwater River. Crossing through South Pass they saw Chimney Rock standing out like a chimney after a house had burned. Court House Rock had rooms cut in it, and a deep and straight-walled canyon was called Devil's Gate. Nearby was a beautiful pool of speckled and spotted fish. Using a wagon cover for a seine, the men caught a lot of fish and the wagon cover was no worse for the use. The rest of that day they dressed and fried the fish. They had all they could eat and took the rest with them.

The trail followed the Fremont and Carson route into the northern part of Utah toward Salt Lake City. Hearing that the Mormons had killed women and children and a whole train of men, and had laid it on the Indians, the expedition took the Truckee route to avoid getting too close to Salt Lake City.

One of the most interesting sights in southern Utah was a great lava bed some sixty feet high and about two hundred feet wide at the base. Lava clear as water was bubbling out at the top, and running down the side. As it cooled, it formed a rocky mound. Soil in the Bear River bottom was rich and black but was covered with lava and wasn't much good for farming. A headboard at a grave stated that the deceased had drunk lava water and had died in a few minutes and that the water was poison.

At Soda Springs, water was pure and fine to drink. From a hole in the basin of a rock issued Steamboat Springs. The water was boiling hot, sizzling like water on a stove. Every few minutes boiling water would shoot up ten or fifteen feet. Even water in the river was so hot that travelers could not hold their hands in it.

Bear Rock was interesting but dangerous. Deep crevices were wide enough for beasts or men to fall into and appeared to be bottomless, for a rock thrown into a crevice made a rattling sound for some time before gradually dying away. Bear Rock was about three miles across and was by far the most dangerous place the train saw. Although the trail led over it, the path had been made reasonably safe by wedging rock in crevices and by picking away projections. It took watchful eyes to get wagons, livestock, and people across safely.

One cow whose feet were badly worn had to be driven more slowly than the others for some distance near Bear River. The two boys caring for the cow came into camp a little later each night. She was valuable, however, so Joshua wished to keep her. One evening she lay down and refused to get up, so the boys came on in to camp. The next morning they found her surrounded by a pack of snarling wolves, and she was trying to keep them off. They had attacked her, torn her flesh, and in places had stripped if off to the bone. As the men approached, the wolves took to the tall grass. There was nothing to do but put the cow out of her misery, which one of the men did with his gun. As soon as the men had gone a short distance, the wolves finished their meal.

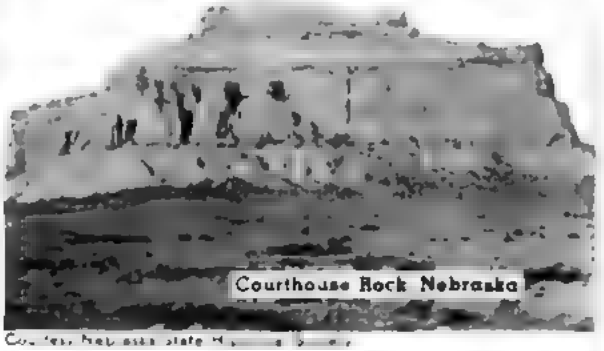
Stopped one day at noon, the train was greeted by an Indian chief who told Joshua in English that some of his tribe had found a white man nearly starved to death. They had carried him back to the chief's lodge. Some of the Bailey men went with the chief to see if he were strong enough to be taken along, but he was too weak to be moved. After a council between Joshua and the chief, it was decided to leave him and the chief promised to look after him. When he was strong enough, the chief would put him on a pony and direct him to Salt Lake City. There are many legends about the kindness of the Indians to wagontrain people.

CATTLE on the trail had to have water every day. The Bailey party entered the desert country of Nevada where much

Courtesy Victor H. White

Chimney Rock, Nebraska

Published by Ezra Meeker
Seattle, Washington

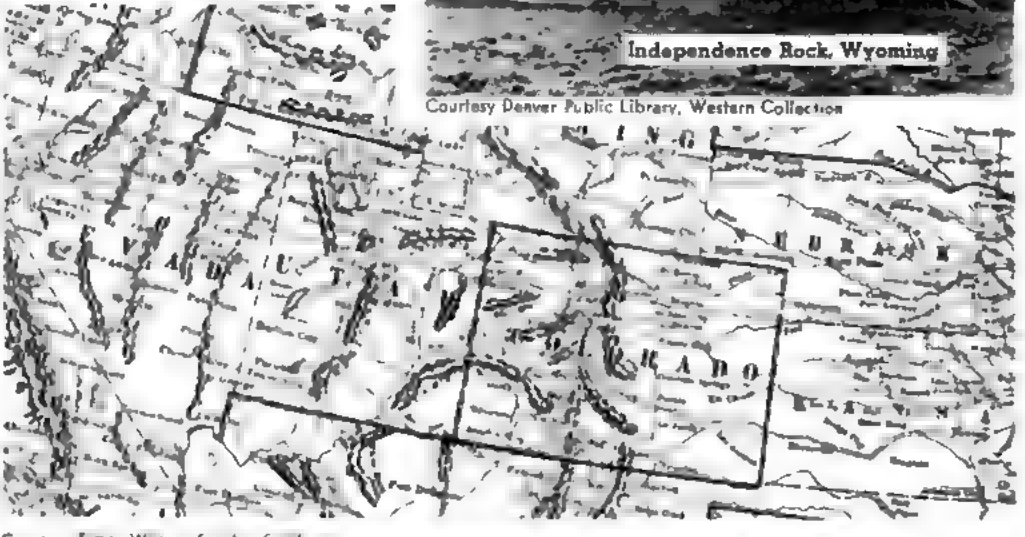


Courthouse Rock Nebraska

Courtesy Nebraska State Historical Society

Independence Rock, Wyoming

Courtesy Denver Public Library, Western Collection



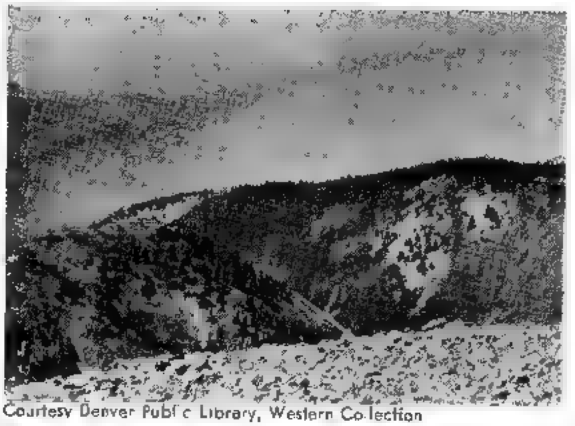
Courtesy Ernie Wilson, Eureka, California

of the water was too brackish to drink. There had been no water for the cattle for twenty-four hours when the train arrived at what is known as Poison River. To get across this small stream, herders drove the cattle in bunches of twelve and whipped them without letting them stop to drink. All livestock were taken across without being poisoned. On the other side of the stream, the party saw the effects of the poison water: dead cattle were so thick that for quite some distance one could step on their carcasses without stepping on the ground.

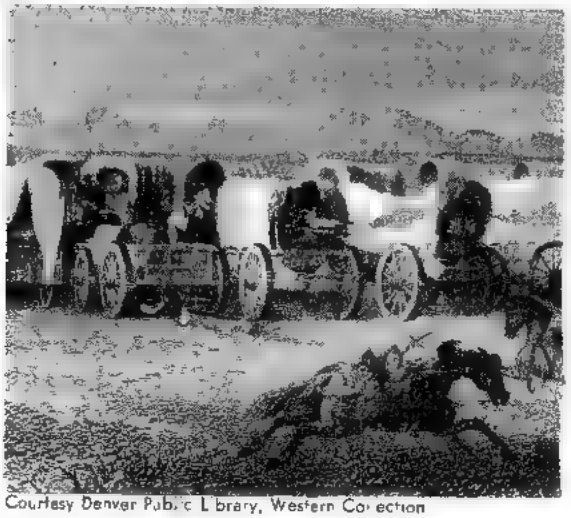
Kit Carson and John Fremont had laid out a trail some time earlier which was followed toward the Humboldt River where they found grass-land for their livestock. Following along the river for some distance, they came to Humboldt Sink. The area in places was smooth and easily traveled, but along the way there were pockets of quicksand so fine and light that the forward foot would sink into it. As one tried to pull out that foot to take another step, the other foot also would sink. So slow was travel that three days and nights were spent crossing the desert. In later years such places were made easier to cross by using poles tied together and covered with willow branches. These had to be renewed frequently and it still was difficult to gain any distance.

The Bailey party followed the Carson River to the California border. Here was a trader's pound, about the size of a city lot, made of log chains and wagon tires. Tires of all sizes and condition were placed crosswise and lengthwise and laced together with chains. The fence thus formed contained tons of steel and was high enough to prevent stock from jumping over.

The men had been divided into mess groups, i.e groups who ate together and often worked together. One night eight men from the same mess were selected for guard duty, four to serve the forepart and the other four for the last half.



Courtesy Denver Public Library, Western Collection



Courtesy Denver Public Library, Western Collection

Top (left and middle): Some of the rugged terrain wagontrains encountered. Lower middle: In the first real Indian scare this drawing could well depict how the wagons were positioned. Top right: An old photo of a wagontrain crossing the Nevada desert. Middle right: This pass in the Sierra Nevadas might be the one Joshua Bailey led his group through en route to the gold fields. Lower right: Map of the area they mined in California.

Wagontrains took that method of protection to apprehend any Indians who might bother them. Joshua had decided another beef should be killed and at first selected men from the guarding mess to help. "Wash" (as Washington Bailey had come to be called) objected, saying his men would be on guard duty. Up to that time this mess group had done all killing of beef and mutton, the main reason being that one of their number was a butcher.

The next morning Joshua called for volunteers to help with the killing. No one answered even after the third call. So he said they would have to do without meat. Two of the men from the guard duty mess who had not been on duty the night before then offered to help.

Wash got up and went over to the other mess to ask one of the men why no one had offered to help with the killing. Tom, the cook, was not expected to help, but John, the other fellow left in camp, answered he would not do any killing. Hot words were passed and John took after Wash, trying to butt him in the stomach. Wash backed off a bit and reached down so that when John came at him he was caught in the cheek and with a jerk fell on his back. There was a lively fight, John being badly whipped and Wash no worse for the battle. This was Wash's first fight and he learned afterwards that John had threatened any of his group that if they intended helping kill the beef, they would have to whip him first.

Joshua called Wash to come eat breakfast with them and praised him for whipping that good-for-nothing Brooks. This was the best meal Wash ever had on the Plains and after that John behaved himself.

ONE MORNING, a cow was missing from the herd, and several herdsmen went to find her. All returned except Crawford Bailey, Wash's brother, and Wint Crumley, who had disappeared in a willow thicket along the river. The camp had moved down the river while George Bailey had gone on foot to kill an antelope. Wash was surprised to see Crawford and Crumley running their horses around a river bend. Catching onto one horse by the tail, Wash managed to keep up. Indians were after them, but when they came in sight of the camp the redskins gave up and disappeared.

Bailey and Crumley had followed the cow's trail into the thicket and had found some Indians scraping a hide to get it ready for tanning. When they had seen the men on horses, they had given chase.

It was not always easy to find a good camping place. Sometimes a suitable one was found in mid-afternoon, but at other times it was nearly dark when they camped. One day at dusk the spot selected was a quarter of a mile from the trail on the right side, where the river bent off to the north. Fires were going and men were busy getting supper when they heard Indians shouting in the distance, "Show shony, show shony, humbugen, humbugen, oss cawaw cawaw, cawaw, cawaw, cawaw, cawaw."

Joshua called out, "There! We are going to be attacked. This is the war whoop. Put out the fires and corral the wagons!"

The wagons were placed so the tongues ran under each other making a large circle. People could get inside the circle and protect themselves from arrows. This was completed within a few minutes. Then Joshua ordered them to load their guns and have their revolvers and knives ready.

This was the first real Indian scare of the trip. Guns were rusty and there were not enough bullets. While some of the men worked on their guns, others were molding bullets. Small, saucer-like vessels called ladles were used to melt the lead. Ladles were split out of oak or other kinds of hardwood, with one end hewn cup-shaped. The opposite end had a small hole cut almost through it with an axe corner. The bullets were fashioned in the ladles. The travelers had to work quickly to make an ample supply. After lead had been placed in the ladles, coals of fire were placed on top. Each bulletmaker blew his breath over the coals, but the light made was quite dim.

JOEL, Wash's cousin, had run away from home as a small boy and, after working his way on a steamboat, had finally located his uncles in Wisconsin. He had found many Indians there and soon had learned their ways. When Joel was sober he was a real coward, but with a few drinks he wasn't afraid of anything. He called out asking if anyone would go with him to see what the Indians wanted. Thinking it was only a bluff, Wash volunteered to go with him.

Joel handed Wash a single-barrel pistol, a Colt revolver, and a combination gun and equipped himself in the same manner. The Indians were getting closer and braver and kept shouting the same war whoop. They were behind the

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Courtesy George Garver, Susanville, California

camp now, only a short distance up the river. Joshua begged the boys to stay so they could all fight together and die together. But Joel was determined to go ahead. Wash wasn't a quitter so they left the camp. It was so dark they could not see each other except by bulk, and then only if within a few feet of each other. They could hear the women and children crying, but soon the camp sounds died away.

Joel said if they could get the chiefs, the train would be saved because the warriors would not attack unless ordered to do so by their leaders. Wash asked Joel where he found the wine and was told it was in the wagon he was driving. Joel promised Wash all he could drink as long as it lasted, if they got the chiefs. Few knew there was any liquor in any of the wagons.

Two Indian chiefs were circling the camp, hollering their war whoops. Joel said to walk straight toward them and call loudly, "Howdy doo."

"How do you do?" called Joel.

"Howdy doo," said the Indian nearest Wash.

Joel jumped in front of Wash, grabbing the Indian and saying, "I'll show you how I do!"

Then Wash saw something move and made a jump and grabbed another Indian's head just under the plait of his hair. This chief pulled, twisted, and thrust his feet forward, throwing his weight on Wash's arm. Wash held him by the hair, warning him if he made a move he would cut his heart out. Joel had his Indian in the same fix, and both men had their Bowie knives drawn on

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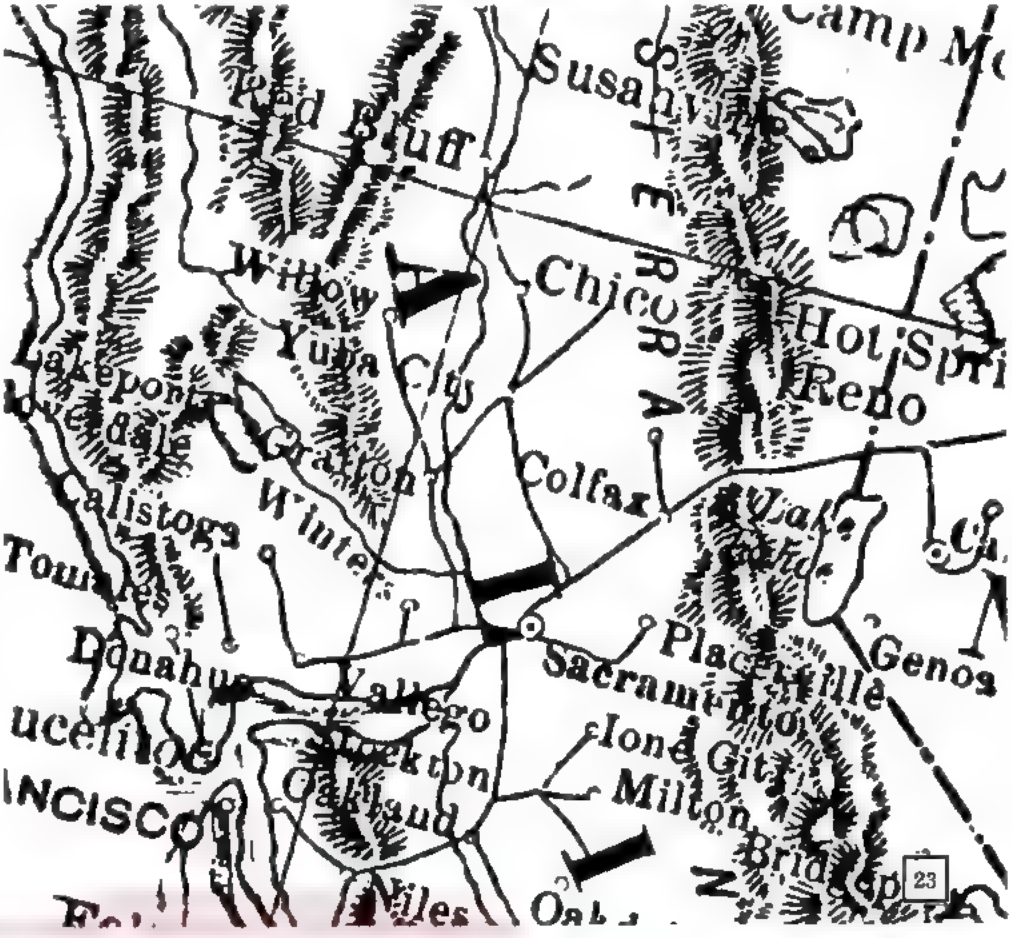


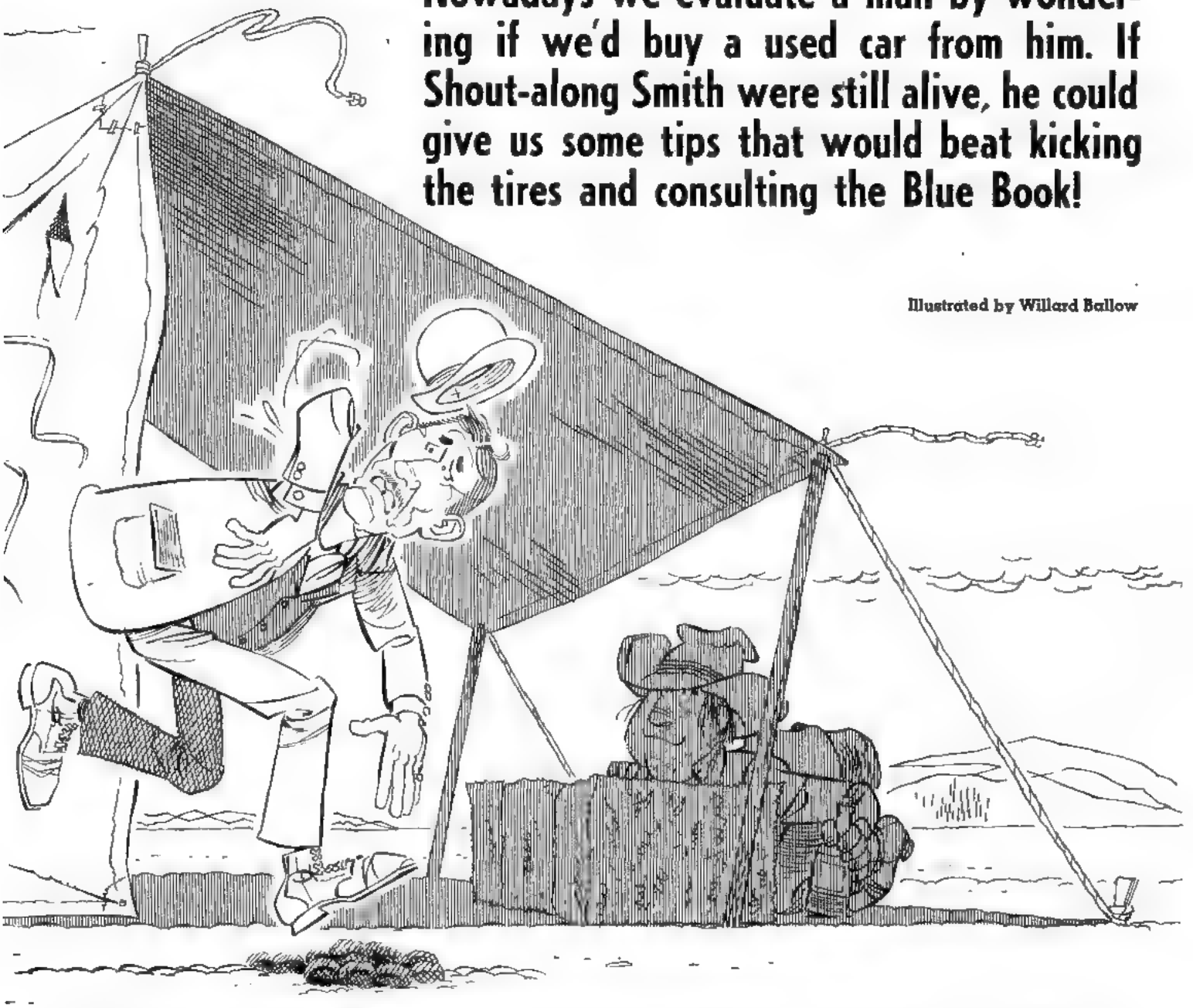
WHEN HORSE TRADING WAS

A PROFESSION

By LUE THOMPSON
as told to JAY J. KALEZ

Nowadays we evaluate a man by wondering if we'd buy a used car from him. If Shout-along Smith were still alive, he could give us some tips that would beat kicking the tires and consulting the Blue Book!

Illustrated by Willard Bullow



Explanatory note: It has been a lot of years since I sat in the beach fire circle of tourists at Lake MacDonald Lodge in Montana's Glacier National Park, and listened to old Lue Thompson, the lodge's trail party guide, spin off his yarns of pioneer western days. Lue was a true range character from his flourishing white handlebar mustache to his throaty measured drawl. He was an old man then, but his mind and memory were as clear and sharp as a youngster's.

Lue's winter quarters was a horse ranch near Big Fork. For miles around Lue was recognized as the best judge of horse flesh in the Swan Lake area, where he acted as veterinarian to surrounding ranches. When it came to horse trading, Lue was in a class by himself.

He always expressed one fear—that he would die without his boots on. That fear was never realized. An accidental fast-burning dynamite fuse accounted for Lue—boots, Stetson and gunbelt.—J.J.K.

ABOUT the smartest horse trader that ever hit these parts was old Shout-along Smith. Shout-along turned up one fall, broke flatter than soup on a saucer, and talked his way onto the winter feed crew. Come spring, he pulled out with enough shoe leather to reach town. Come fall he showed up again, driving a team of high checked bays hitched to a town buggy, with a wife and two kids holding down the back seat. Only explanation Shout-along had to offer was "horse trading" luck.

Horse breaking was a part of Shout-along's trade. He could judge horse flesh down to a point where he could spot cash on the hoof quicker than a house stud dealer can spot a crimped deck.

Jed Franklin had a fancy stallion at his stable corrals, that was too mean to risk getting within pole distance of. Jed had picked the animal up in a trade and

(Continued on page 50)

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NUGGETS

THE LEGEND OF VIVIA

By Phillip Steele

THE Cherokee and Osage Indian dispute over tribal lands resulted in the establishment of Fort Gibson, Indian Territory. Lieutenant Colonel Matthew Arbuckle and his party from Fort Smith, Arkansas began construction of America's westernmost fort on April 21, 1824.

During the years 1824-1869, the hundreds who died there were buried in several small cemeteries surrounding the fort. After the establishment of a national cemetery on a seven-acre plot to the east in 1869, most graves were moved to it. When the cemetery was plotted, a large circle surrounding the flag pole was reserved for the certain officers who had commanded the fort and for soldiers deserving special recognition for heroic service to their country. This circle was to be referred to as "officers' circle" or the "circle of honor."

Among the many monuments to the honored dead in this circle, one stone—reading Vivia Thomas, January 7, 1870—seems out of place; but the legend of Vivia is one of the frontier's most romantic and unusual stories. It has been told from generation to generation.

Other than the National Cemetery Records which state that Vivia Thomas was a female who died January 7, 1870, few other facts have ever been recorded about her. The legend as it is told, however, was somewhat substantiated in the 1930s by Ellen Goldsby Lynch who had worked as a maid and washwoman at the fort in the early 1870s.

Aunt Ellen, as she was called, was a mixture of Negro, Caucasian and Indian. She was born in the Fort Gibson region and employed at the fort at an early age. Ellen met her first husband, a Negro named Goldsby, at this military post. Shorty after their marriage he was transferred to Fort Concho, Texas where their first child, Crawford, was born. Crawford, alias Cherokee Bill, was to become one of Indian Territory's most notorious outlaws in later years. Ellen's husband deserted his family and the 10th Cavalry to ride with Villa in Mexico.

Several years later Ellen returned to Fort Gibson and married a man named William Lynch. When Lynch died in the 1930s Ellen applied for a widow's pension from her second husband's Civil War service. To her surprise, it was denied because Goldsby was still living in Hominy, Oklahoma. She then employed the services of Q. B. Boydstun, a prominent Fort Gibson attorney and historian to help her settle the controversy.

During the two years Boydstun represented Aunt Ellen he questioned her extensively on early Fort Gibson history and the Vivia legend. The legend, as it is still told today, is basically the same as Aunt Ellen remembered it from the days she worked there in the early 1870s. (Boydstun later served on the commission that restored Fort Gibson, and the information he received from Aunt Ellen and from old War Department records greatly assisted in the restoration of this historic fort in 1936.)

VIVIA THOMAS was the high-spirited daughter of wealthy Boston parents. She had attended the finest schools in the East, and in search of a husband regular-

Below, left: Gravesite of Vivia Thomas in the "Circle of Honor" at the National Cemetery at Fort Gibson in Oklahoma. Right: Two views of Fort Gibson, established in 1824, restored in 1936.

Photos Courtesy Author

ly attended Boston society's finest affairs. It was at one of the balls held following the Civil War that Vivia met and fell in love with a handsome young lieutenant.

After several months of courtship their engagement and marriage plans were announced. Shortly before their wedding date, however, the Lieutenant, who had been more intrigued by Vivia's wealth and place in society than by her beauty, suddenly disappeared. He left Vivia a note to the effect that he desired to go west in search of adventure; marriage and the security of Boston society were not for him, after all.

Brokenhearted and bitter over the embarrassment caused her and her family, Vivia left home in search of the lover who had betrayed her. Learning from the military that the lieutenant was stationed at Fort Gibson, Indian Territory, her long journey began. The trip was extremely hard, especially for a girl who had known only luxury, but her revengeful heart pushed her onward. During the several months' journey Vivia cut her hair and dressed in man's attire. At first her motive for the disguise was for protection, but it proved so successful she decided to retain it to get close to her former lover. When Vivia reached the fort she enlisted in the U.S. Cavalry under an unknown male alias.

During the several months that followed, she somehow avoided recognition by the young lieutenant though she frequently observed him and contemplated how she would satisfy the burning hatred and desire for revenge within her. The lieutenant had an Indian girl friend a short distance from the fort whom he would visit each evening. On several occasions Vivia followed him to the rendezvous and on each occasion her bitterness grew.

ONE cold December evening in 1869, Vivia trailed the lieutenant on his routine trip; but this time she hid behind a large rock near a point on the trail where it crossed a small stream. The moon was full and she had a full view of the trail from her hiding place. In the brisk winter air the gallop of the lieutenant's returning horse was heard. Just as he crossed the stream he caught the full charge of Vivia's big rifle and fell from his horse to the frozen ground. The next morning his body was found by a passerby and brought to the fort. An extensive investigation was held to no avail and finally was dropped with the assumption that the lieutenant had been killed by Indians who resented his attentions toward the maiden.

At first Vivia was happy and relieved. She had satisfied the longing for revenge which had driven her for so long. After a few days had passed, however, she became remorseful, deeply grieved and disturbed over killing the only man she had ever deeply loved. She began leaving her quarters after sundown and going to the lieutenant's grave where she wept for hours and prayed for forgiveness.

Vivia soon contracted pneumonia from the continued exposure, and one night collasped near her lover's grave. At dawn on January 7, 1870 she was noticed lying near the grave and was rushed to the infirmary where she died a few hours later. After her death an old priest at the fort, to whom the remorseful girl had confessed a few days earlier, came forward with the true story of Vivia. The courage it took to come alone into the frontier, and to carry out a successful disguise as a male, touched the heart of the fort commander, Lieutenant Colonel Daniel Huston, Jr., as well as all other military stationed there. Vivia, therefore, was awarded a place of honor for burial in the officers' circle.

BUGS, SWEAT AND DIRT

By Blanche McGeough

THE first miners venturing into the upper reaches of northern California were indifferent to bathing. It was a waste of time, they reasoned, as the next day they returned to their cabins as filthy as the day before, and an overall that could stand alone was considered a symbol of honest endeavor. When the camps grew into towns and hamlets later on, and a semblance to culture was established, bathing was still a matter of indifference unless one was encumbered with a wife. It was to be expected that women and children would bathe regularly but a quick wash in a tin basin seemed sufficient for a man—at least from Sunday through Thursday. A Saturday cleansing in a wooden or galvanized tub, flat on the kitchen floor, was sometimes necessary in order to keep peace in the home and silence a nagging wife. Most hard-working males agreed that a man who bathed often was subject to suspicion.

As a hamlet grew in size, stage lines opened, transportation was established, and one particular scourge to humanity invaded every mining town in the north. The average housewife was clean and tidy and took special care of her home—no matter how humble or elaborate; but regardless of scrubbing with lye soap or cleaning with coal oil, no one escaped bedbugs at some time or other! If one bedbug found its way into the home it always had relatives that followed. If a crack or crevice could be found in the wall, they established a permanent colony, coming out at night to dine on anyone within sleeping distance and, filled to capacity, traveling back at crack of dawn to hide in the wall.

The Onion Valley Hotel, midway between La Porte and Quincy in Plumas County, was owned and managed by a fine couple named Miller. It was a stage stop and offered good meals, comfortable and clean rooms for travelers, and was considered a credit to the community.

The peace and tranquillity of the Miller family was destroyed by a whiskey drummer from Sacramento. The gent making the rounds of his new territory, left La Porte one morning on the local stage, bound for Quincy. By the time he reached Onion Valley he had sampled his own wares to the point he thought it best to spend the rest of the day and night in the hotel, which he did.

The next day, late in the afternoon, he entered a barber shop in Quincy for a bath, shave and haircut. While waiting his turn, he remarked to a customer (who was the town's best gossip) that he had had a most remarkable experience the night before while sleeping in the Onion Valley Hotel. He said that after a fine supper he had retired early—not feeling too well—and had fallen asleep immediately due to the brisk mountain air.

About twelve o'clock he had heard the loveliest music and singing; he said it sounded like angel voices from close by. The drummer said he lit a candle to look about. In a washbowl half-filled with water, a match was floating around, propelled by four bedbugs singing "A Night on the Ocean Wave," and from the wall in back of the wash stand, an orchestra led the singing.

Onion Valley today is a ghost town, but there was a time a few years back when there were boarding houses and homes for 1,800 or more human beings—and without doubt two or more bedbugs to keep each one company on a cold winter's night!

LITTLE SLEEPING CHILD CREEK

By Dick Waits

I HAVE reached the age where most of my thoughts are of the past. This is a story of a bright spot in my life, and I shall attempt to tell it just as it happened.

Little Sleeping Child Creek and Big Sleeping Child Creek are located in the Bitterroot Valley of Montana. The smaller creek is in an area that was used by Indians as a camping ground. Once when they broke camp, they left a small child behind. Some white people found the baby asleep beside the creek, so it was called 'Sleeping Child Creek.

Many years ago my wife and I bought 120 acres of land in this beautiful valley, taking our water for irrigation out of Big Sleeping Child Creek. After we paid for our land we were short of money, so I got a job haying on a ranch. We started haying at the home ranch and worked two miles up the long, narrow valley. I did all of the bucking of the hay with horses, using a regular buck rake or sweep.

There was an old ranch house at the upper end of the valley, and the owner asked me to stay and feed cattle that winter. He offered to repair the house so it would be liveable. When I talked it over with my wife, she said, "This is a beautiful place and we can fix the house. We can be here by ourselves." This was the last house on the creek; there was not another one to the north for at least fifty miles.

So when I finshed haying, we moved in and went to work, reclaiming the house from the packrats and making the necessary repairs. The cellar under the kitchen had caved in and was beyond repair. But there was a range in the kitchen, and it was a good one, so that took care of the cooking problem. There was also a wood heater that we would sit by when winter came.

Plenty of wood was available, but there was no water in the house. We packed our water by bucketfuls from the

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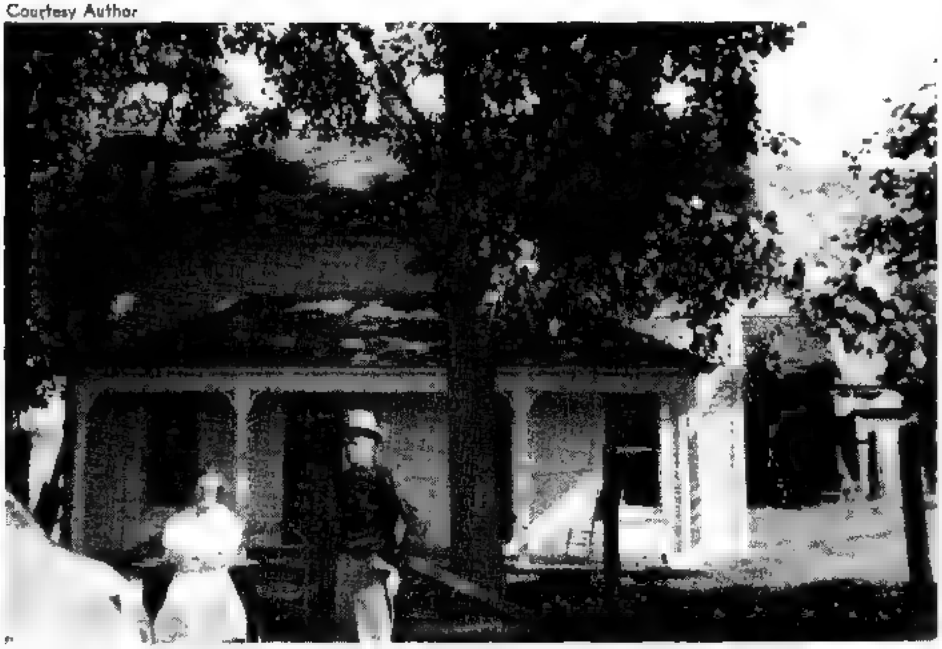
Courtesy Author



Mr. and Mrs. Dick Waits in front of their home on the Big Sleeping Child Creek. The photo was taken during the time they worked on Little Sleeping Child Ranch.

creek which was about fifty yards away. A large teakettle was kept on the stove for hot water; also, a wonderful old coffee pot in which we boiled our coffee.

There was a bedroom upstairs and another downstairs, along with a living room and kitchen. But there was no bathroom, and the outhouse was in bad condition. The excavation had caved at one end, and that end had dropped down so that it sat at a twenty-five degree angle.

We soon got everything in fair shape, and the place began to look as if someone lived there. Anyway we liked it and we were very happy.

My wife had a cousin from Carey, Idaho who came to visit us, and we decided to go camping. We wanted fish for lunch, so we stopped in a favorable spot under some trees and started fishing. The trout were hungry, and we soon caught all we needed. We had built a fire and started the coffee to boil when we heard a dog barking on the mountainside above us. Suddenly a big black bear came into sight, followed by the dog. The bear must have been tired of running, for he stopped and climbed a big pine tree on the slope.

Then we heard someone yelling and urging the dog on. By that time the dog had reached the tree and was circling it, barking at every jump. Then a woman on horseback appeared against the skyline. Next, two men appeared, one of them carrying a rifle and both walking as if they were very tired. When they got within good shooting range the man with the gun aimed and fired.

I was sure that would be the last of the bear, but it did not turn out that way. Though the bear fell, he got up running and headed up the ridge toward the hunters. The woman and the horse broke ground first and headed down the other side of the mountain.. The man without a gun came our way, and the man with the rifle stood his ground for a short time. At last he started shooting, but the bear kept going in his direction. When the gun was empty, that man too broke ground and dodged behind a big tree. The bear went back the way he came, the dog still barking behind him.

By this time the fire was out, so we started all over to prepare our lunch. As we started to drink our coffee someone decided we should say a toast to the brave bear, and I was nominated to do the honor. This is what I came up with: "Mr. Bear, we three saw everything that happened up on the mountainside, and we are very happy over the outcome. May you always find plenty of berries to make you fat and a cozy cave for hibernation. And we hope you are never again chased by a dog or shot at by a man." Then we went ahead with our lunch: coffee cooked over a campfire, fried spuds, and trout just caught out of a cold stream. It was a good day, one of those days that made life worth living.

SOON we were busy with ranch work. The people we worked for were good employers and became our good friends, seeming to feel that we were a part of their family. Their names were Al and Dode Patterson, and they still own the ranch.

We had been busy weaning calves and selling the steer calves. Then in October I started building fences around the haystacks so we could turn the cows into the fields to graze. One day Mae decided to go with me and pick choke-cherries while I worked. She took a large kettle and I, my tools. After helping me awhile, she went about her cherry picking.

Suddenly I looked her way and saw a black bear on the opposite side of the clump of choke-cherry bushes. Now this was berry country, and bears love berries and fruit. They raided our apple orchard every night. This bear stopped and looked back at Mae, but she still did not see him. I yelled, "Mae, there is a bear near you, and he wants those cherries! Run for your life!"

She calmly replied, "I want some of these cherries too."

I told her the bear was no cub; he looked as big as an Angus cow and was the same color. But she stubbornly remarked that there were plenty of cherries for both of them. "He can stay on his side, and I'll stay on mine. If he comes on my side, I'll bash him over the head with this stew kettle." Well, that was that. I started to her rescue while the old bear started up the mountain, stopping at intervals to look back at Mae.

I went back to my fencing, and after awhile I saw Mae going to the house with her kettle of fruit. When I got home she had brought in the wood, kindling, and water. She had also prepared a meal of elk steak, potatoes and real coffee. Some other man might have beaten her with a wet rope, but that was not my way.

When we sat down to eat, she did remark, "That was a nice old bear. He didn't bother me and I didn't bother him. He can come back tonight for his share of the cherries."

I replied, "Yes, he was a good bear. But I couldn't read his mind." And that closed the subject.

WE bought chickens to furnish us with fresh eggs. The boss brought us a Jersey cow and a team of good horses, Barney and Bessie. We repaired the barn so our animals would have adequate shelter, and then we were set for the cold days ahead. A pair of mountain bluejays moved nearby for the winter. Now, these birds are something to see. They are rather large and have a topknot that looks like a modern teen-ager's hair-do.

I can truthfully say that that was one of the happiest winters of my whole lifetime. We did not see many people, but we had each other. And even if I could do so, I would not sell this memory for any price. To those who might be inclined to look down their noses at the way we lived that winter, I can only say they just do not understand how satisfying our way of life has always been.

Maybe some winter I'll see you up on Little Sleeping Child Creek.

"Wal, you said to follow her!"

WESTERN BOOK ROUNDUP

By The Old Bookaroos

ATTENTION

We do not handle the books reviewed below. If interested in purchasing, please check your local bookstore, or address your order to the individual publisher in care of this office and we will be glad to forward. Be sure to make your check payable to the publisher of the book, not to us.

RARE CUSTERIANA

It seems appropriate that the rarest of all Custer books be the first volume to be reprinted in the Custeriana Series of Interland Publishing. It is *The Grand Duke Alexis in the United States of America* ($15.00). It was first issued *FOR PRIVATE DISTRIBUTION* by its anonymous compiler in Boston a century ago in an edition of perhaps one hundred copies. It is the story of the visit of the Russian Grand Duke during the winter of 1871-72 and includes much on the buffalo hunt in Nebraska where Buffalo Bill was the guide and General Custer was the Grand Duke's constant hunting partner. Only five copies of the original edition are now known. In addition to making the volume available to the reading public for the first time, this handsome reprint has added values—a frontispiece by Nick Eggenhofer, a brief preface by John M. Carroll, general editor of the Custeriana Series, and an introduction by Old Bookaroo Jeff Dykes. Jeff tells the story of his literary detecting that revealed the identity of the compiler-editor of the book and provides a brief biographical sketch of him. Worthwhile and the price is right.

BIG SKY COUNTRY

Don McCarthy gives his readers a wide choice of subjects in his clutch of stories in *Afternoons in Montana* (North Plains Press, $5.95). Ten years a news-hawk on the Billings *Gazette*, he later served as an editorial writer in the Omaha *World Herald*. After three years there, he became assistant manager of AK-SAR-BEN (fair and stock show) and in 1950 transferred to Kansas City where he took charge of public relations and advertising for the *Hereford Journal*. Presently, McCarthy is western manager of the American Live Stock Insurance Company in Denver. He holds strong sentiments for Montana which are reflected in chapters of his book of memories of the state. There are revealing tales about Will James, Hemingway, poet Robert Frost's daughter, and the hanging of a murderer. Newspaper reporting introduced him to a variety of interesting people, including Earl Snooks of the Snooks Trading Company, who also managed Will James' business affairs and tried to keep him free from panhandlers and greedy women trying to take him for a bundle. One of the rare yarns is about the madam of a bordello whose free-wheeling lingo was laced with smutty four-lettered words. Don's book winds up with a revised edition of his cowboy glossary, *Language of the Mosshorn*.

BEST OF THE BUFFALO SOLDIERS

The publication of *The Black Military Experience in the American West* (Liveright, $17.50) as edited by John M. Carroll is a major contribution to black and national history. To be sure, most of the text of this big handsome book of nearly 600 pages is available in other forms—as magazine articles, official reports, or as minor segments of other military histories, but Carroll gathered the fragments, organized and edited them into a volume that is worthy of the Ninth and Tenth Cavalry and the Twenty-fourth and Twenty-fifth Infantry, the four black regiments that served so valiantly on the western frontier. In addition to the reports and articles by the officers of these regiments there are contributions by Fray Angelico Chavez, Robert M. Utley, Frederic Remington, Elizabeth B. Custer, J. Evetts Haley and many others. The choice of material was excellent and the result is a readable narrative of high historical value. Supplementing the text are over sixty drawings, including seventeen by Remington who rode with the Tenth on occasion, nine by Bjorklund, seventeen by Cisneros, and eight by Rossi. With the exception of the drawings by Remington (and possibly one or two others) the illustrations were executed specifically to enhance this book, and they are great. Notes, a good bibliography and an index add to its value as a reference. The end sheet illustration is by Nick Eggenhofer and the dust wrapper illustration in color is by Charles M. Russell. There is also a limited edition of 300 copies signed by Carroll, slipcased and accompanied by numbered and signed prints of Jose Cisneros and Joe Grandee, at $100.00. Highly recommended.

DEBUNKING OUR GUNMEN

Good marks can be racked up for *The Gunfighters* (Caxton, $12.95) by Dale T. Schoenberger. The author followed the cold trails of the past for the truth about seven famous gun-toting western folk heroes. Wyatt Earp, Doc Holliday, Bat Masterson, Wild Bill Hickok, Clay Allison, Luke Short and Ben Thompson were lionized by dime-novel writers who gave them built-in virtues that the men never possessed. In the course of ten years, Schoenberger crisscrossed the nation in search of facts for his brief biographies of these gunmen. He searched archives, newspaper files, read dizzy folktales about them and interviewed living relatives and acquaintances who either knew or had reliable information about them. While Earp, Hickok, Thompson and Masterson had been peace officers, all seven fit a common mould. They were selfish toughs who manipulated laws to suit their own ends and at times were fugitives from the courts. They were gunfighting bullies who boozed, gambled and lived with prostitutes and other women they never married. Masterson was the only one to outlive his rowdy past and achieve a semblance of respectability. He ended up as a sportswriter for a New York newspaper. The author has written a convincing book that exposes the false fronts that have long covered the nefarious antics of these faked heroes. Very good.

RANGE LIFE

An Album of the American Cowboy (Franklin Watts, $5.95) by John Williams Malone presents a bird's-eye-view of America's major folk hero at work and play in his frontier environment. The life and times of the cowboy come alive through a succession of drawings and photographs depicting cattle roundups, branding, trail driving, bronc-busting, hell-raising and marketing. Artist Frederic Remington is the largest single contributor, but drawings of numerous other contemporary artists are included, plus a good one by C. M. Russell. There are many illustrations of historic cowboys, ranchmen and lawmen. Some cowhands became outlaws, among them Isom Dart, Billy the Kid, and Butch Cassidy. The author shows the Chisholm Trail as originating near the Texas Gulf Coast and ending in Abilene, Kansas, when it really started well into Indian Territory and ended at Wichita, Kansas. The book is tops for those seeking an easy quickie introduction to cowboy history and lore.

JAVELINA

Species of the pig family thrived in prehistoric America but all have disappeared except the javelina of the Southwest and Latin America. The life history of our remaining native pig is the subject of an entertaining illustrated book for juveniles, *Collared Peccary—The Javelina* (Steck-Vaughn, $2.95) by Iona Seibert Hiser. This gregarious little creature eats a wide variety of roots, seeds, berries, snakes, lizzards, bugs, worms, birds, rodents and carrion. The heavily tusked, bristly little pig with its protective coloration slithers through brush to search for food or to elude enemies. Not an attentive mother, the sow breeds during all seasons and produces one or two precocious piglets. While the meat is strong and tough, the animal was hunted until it was becoming an endangered species. Present game laws prevent indiscriminate shooting, and javelinas are increasing. Very good.

DIFFICULT DOCTORING

Medicine on the Santa Fe Trail (Morningside Bookshop, P.O. Box 336, Forrest Park Station, Dayton, Ohio 45405,

(Continued on page 38)

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Courtesy Arizona Pioneers' Historical Society

HENRY

By FRED E. WARNER

Photos Courtesy Author

HEINRICH HEINSEL grew to manhood in his native Germany in the old traditions of Europe, but he was destined to become a part of the colorful history of the great American West.

Born in 1817, his discovery of a potential coal mine on his father's property near Essen greatly increased the value of the property and soon it was confiscated by the German government. Heinsel, disillusioned, left the Fatherland in disgust and despair in 1861, sailing around Cape Horn and arriving in distant San Francisco in 1862.

Determined to start life anew, he changed his name to Henry Wickenburg and set out for Yuma, Arizona, then on to La Paz, on the Colorado River. In La Paz, Wickenburg learned that Pauline Weaver, who had earlier discovered gold, was in central Arizona. He found Weaver, formed a partnership and prospected the Harquahala Mountains, but the two men found only disappointment and finally separated.

Later, near the Hassayampa River, legend has it that Wickenburg threw some rocks at his straying burro and found them to contain large amounts of gold! A second version is that he shot a circling vulture, and upon examining the spot, found the ground abundant with gold nuggets. Still another version is that while examining nuggets he had located, a gracefully arcing vulture cast

Above: Henry Wickenburg, who in 1863 discovered the Vulture Mine, pictured below.

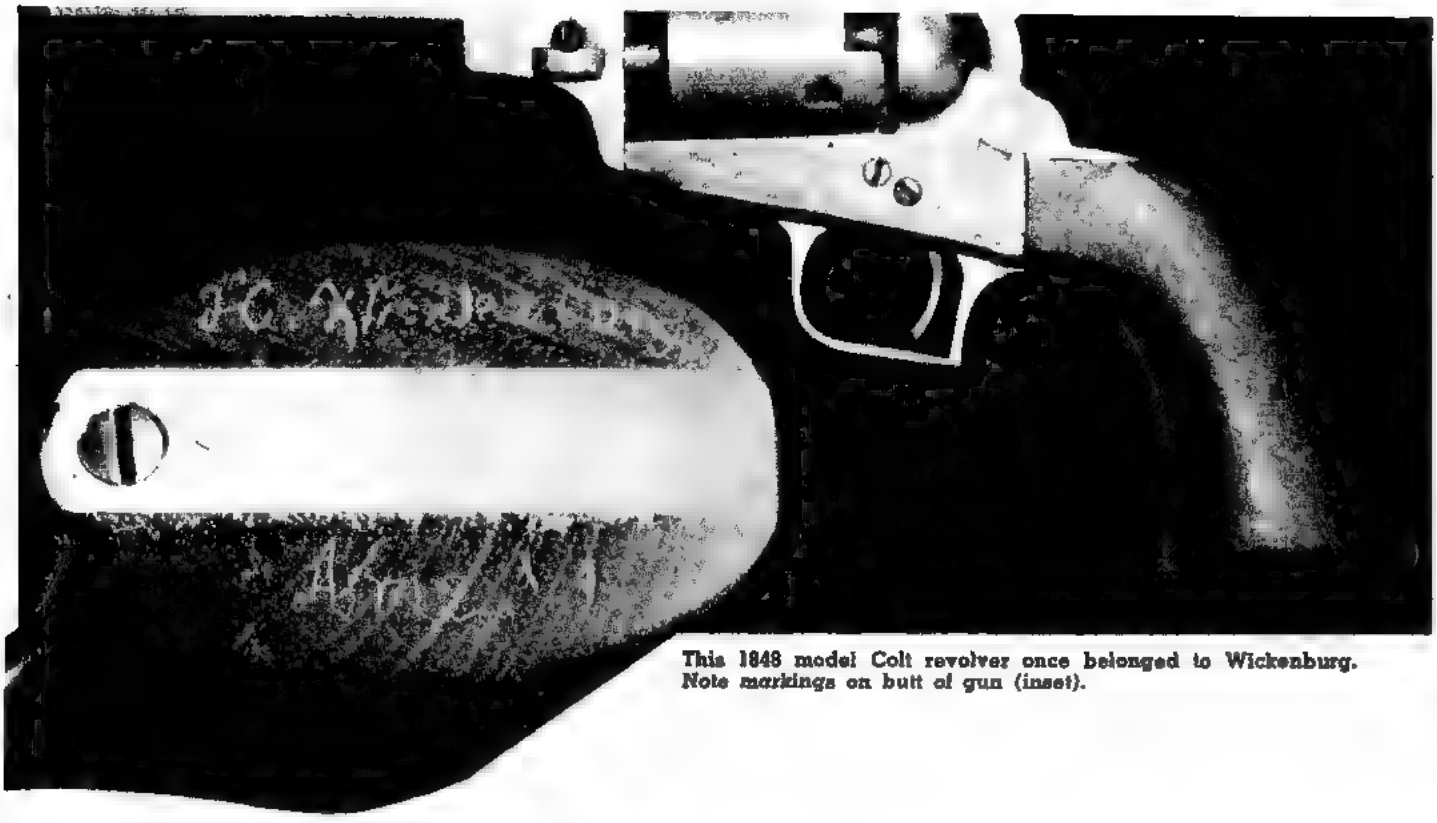
Courtesy Arizona Pioneers' Historical Society

a shadow over him and landed on a nearby ledge. As he held the nuggets in his hand he said, "Gold!" The Vulture Mine was discovered in 1863 and mining history was in the making. These were probably the prospector's happiest years, searching, hoping and finally achieving his objective.

From a modest beginning, with little to work with, Wickenburg built a crude arrastre for crushing ore. News of the sensational yield spread at once and the rush was on. The strike was too big for Henry to handle alone, so he decided to sell the ore outright at fifteen dollars a ton and let the buyer do the difficult crushing. Over forty primitive arrastres appeared within a year; by 1866 a twenty-stamp mill was on the Hassayampa River and by 1879 the lessees installed an eighty-stamp mill at the mine. Day after day, month after month, the Vulture produced gold at an astounding rate of $3,000 a day.

After the Civil War, with the government in need of gold, the Vulture Mine

(Continued on page 57)



This 1848 model Colt revolver once belonged to Wickenburg. Note markings on butt of gun (inset).

WICKENBURG'S OLD COLT

The gun brings to mind a German's quest far from home, his brief glory with the Vulture Mine, his long days of disillusionment and despair...

Wickenburg, Arizona in 1800s.

Courtesy Arizona Pioneers' Historical Society

A Trek to the Gold Fields

(Continued from page 23)

their victims. Then the Bailey boys marched the Indians toward camp. When the children saw their cousins they danced for joy.

Joshua watched the Indians all night. The other men guarded the stock and camp, all except Joel and Wash who slept. But the women and children didn't rest much that night.

The next morning, Joshua proposed they give the captives breakfast, treat them well, then let them go and hope they would not molest the train again.

Some Indians from another tribe visited the train about noon. One, the chief, could speak good English. He told Joshua that the Indians who caused them trouble were bad men, intent on killing white people and not caring how many of their own men were killed. The renegades were surprised when the Bailey men jumped on them and that was what had saved the whole wagontrain.

FOUR MEN left the train several days before it reached the desert. Joshua had tried to get them to stay but they had refused; so he had offered them food to take along. Two of the men had taken some, but the other two would not take any. In the early days, there were many trading posts along the trails going West, and these four planned to get more supplies at such places as they hurried on ahead of the outfit. But the people who managed the posts in the Sierra Nevada Mountains had gone back to California, and the men nearly starved to death. They ate birds and anything else which would ease their great hunger.

Joshua had hoped in vain to buy flour at a trading post so their supply was low by the time the party reached Carson Valley. For some 500 miles they lived on beef and mutton.

Johnson Cut-Off in the Sierra Nevada Mountains presented the most difficult part of the trip, almost like climbing straight up a wall. By zigzagging back and forth they made it to the top in six days, then rested one night. Joshua lost only a horse, a weak animal that had stumbled and fallen off the trail.

The trail down was equally steep. Wash was asked to take the lead. He yoked up the oxen and started. Both rear wheels were locked, and a chain was wrapped twice around the felloe and tire to make the wheel drag hard on the ground. Usually the driver walked on the left side of the oxen, in this case the lower side. But a sudden jerk and a driver could be hurled down the mountainside so Wash planned to get on the right or upper side for safety. The dust dimmed Wash's vision as he crossed over, and it was nearly sundown when he saw the oxen again. At the foot of the mountain, Wash found the three yoke of oxen and the wagon intact, although one of the oxen died that night. It had been a hard journey for the six head of cattle, as well as for Wash.

Joshua and his wife were in a top buggy pulled by two horses. The team fairly slid down the steep mountain on their hind parts, not being able to take a step for rods at a time. With the train underway again on more level ground, the travelers met a man with a packtrain taking supplies to the miners in Carson Valley. Joshua persuaded him to sell two fifty-pound sacks of flour at thirty

Courtesy California State Library

Above: Sluicing near Nevada City, 1852 and placer mining on Deer Creek (right) shows activity in which the men of Bailey's wagontrain were involved during their prospecting.

Below left to right: This gold pan and "Long Tom" are like those used by the Bailey miners.

Courtesy Charles Kelly, Salt Lake City, Utah

Courtesy California State Library

Courtesy California Title Insurance and Trust Company, Los Angeles

dollars a sack. So the Baileys had bread for the first time since crossing the desert.

That night Joshua's black horse was stolen from camp. And from there on to the gold mines, it snowed or rained every day. On the mountains the snow was often two or more inches deep, but in the valleys it rained.

Camp in Pleasant Valley was near a stream called Boland's Run. Thomas Boland kept the trading post, and in addition to groceries he had clothing, boats, and shoes. As usual the post included a saloon. Soon Joshua and his family crossed the McCosnia River to a place called Fair Play, and Joshua told the men that his family could proceed to their future homesite without further help. The men told Joshua and his family goodbye and started prospecting for gold. It was late in November.

AFTER reaching California, they learned that the hostile Indians on the Humboldt River had raided at least two more camps that year. One man escaped from one of the camps and two from another, but the rest of the men, women, and children had been killed. Two of the trains had camped rather close together for protection. The Indians had hallooed on one side and while the campers were looking for them, other Indians had come right in on them. The marauders had cut open sacks of flour and spilled them along the trail. They had cut open the feather beds, scattering the feathers. The survivors related how the Indians had cooked and eaten portions of an unyoked ox. The survivors had taken with them all the livestock they had found near the two camps and had gone on to California.

Joshua stayed in Fair Play mining district. His nephews and the other young men crossed back over the McCosnia River to Boland's Run and then went on to Four Springs Valley before they struck any pay dirt. After some time, they found a claim that paid each man six dollars a day without water. They had to pay four dollars a day for water, or one dollar an inch. They worked here about three weeks and then the dam broke, flooding the area.

Crawford Bailey and Wint Crumley went out prospecting about fourteen miles and found surface diggings. They

(Continued on page 56)

Below left: Typical cradle or rocker. Right: This prospector with cradle on his pack mules is probably the way Bailey and his group were outfitted in their search for gold.

Courtesy California State Library

Courtesy California State Library

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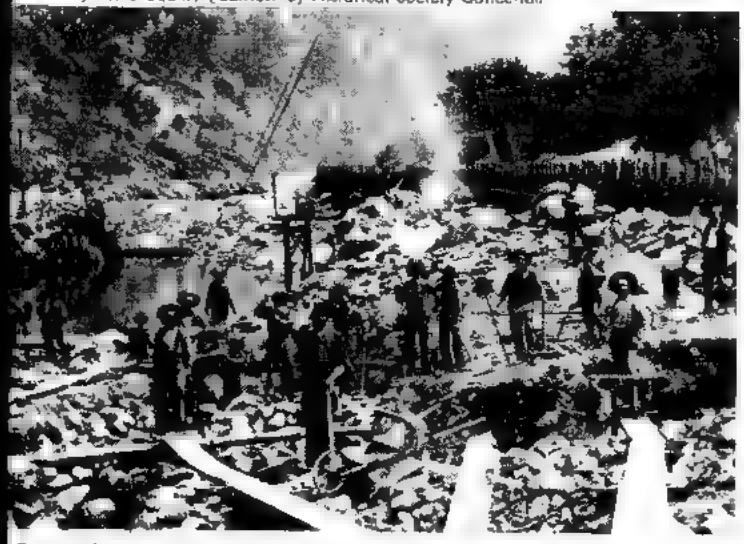
Courtesy Butte County (California) Historical Society Collection



Courtesy Bancroft Library, University of California

Courtesy Bancroft Library, University of California

Top left and right: Major McLaughlin's wall diverting the Feather River to expose the bottom he believed contained incalculable wealth in gold and platinum. Middle left: The Feather River bottom laid bare, a vivid scene of McLaughlin's colossal failure. George Mathews, foreman, near far right with hat tipped. Lower left: Deep potholes revealed little gold, but were filled with flood debris. A part of the fabulous Table Mountain is seen in rear. Far right: Major Frank McLaughlin.

TAME

By ED EARL REPP

Photos Courtesy Author

THE old gold rush camp of Ophir town, now Oroville, California and seat of Butte County, lies like the hub of a giant wagon wheel. Gold trails of 1849 stretch out into the surrounding Feather River country in all directions. Ghost towns and semi-ghost towns exist in many locations, sometimes mute evidence of the roaring days when Dogtown, Helltown, Whiskey Flat, Pair-o-Dice (Paradise now), Rich Bar, Jarbo Gap, Humbug, Toadtown, Poverty Hill, Portwine, Yankee Hill, Strawberry, French Corral, and countless others sprawled along the mountain trails. The Feather River country is a land of perpendiculars, of awe-inspiring canyons and abysses, mystery, legend, and raw gold.

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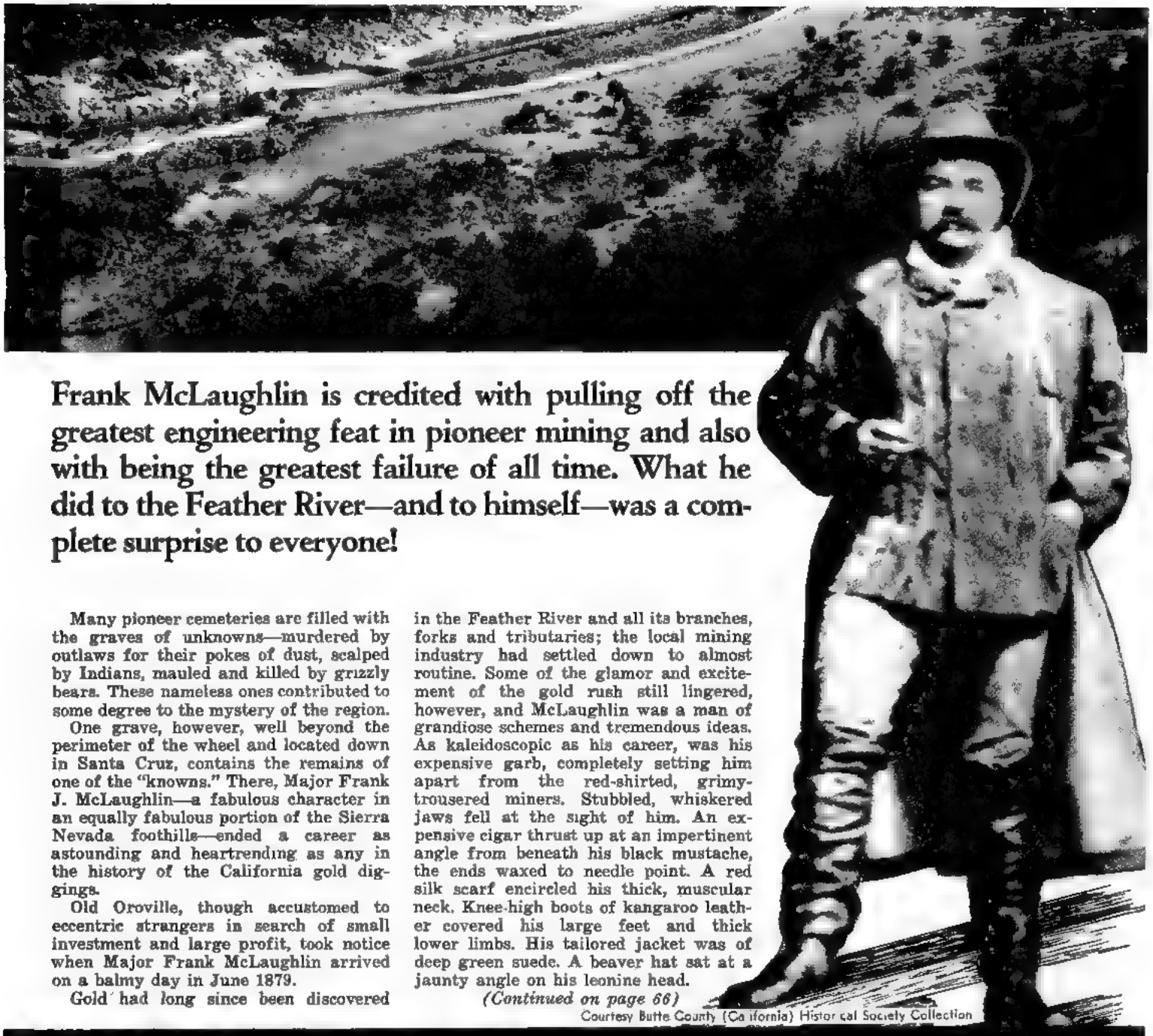


Courtesy Butte County (California) Historical Society Collection

the WILD RIVER

Frank McLaughlin is credited with pulling off the greatest engineering feat in pioneer mining and also with being the greatest failure of all time. What he did to the Feather River—and to himself—was a complete surprise to everyone!

Many pioneer cemeteries are filled with the graves of unknowns—murdered by outlaws for their pokes of dust, scalped by Indians, mauled and killed by grizzly bears. These nameless ones contributed to some degree to the mystery of the region.

One grave, however, well beyond the perimeter of the wheel and located down in Santa Cruz, contains the remains of one of the "knowns." There, Major Frank J. McLaughlin—a fabulous character in an equally fabulous portion of the Sierra Nevada foothills—ended a career as astounding and heartrending as any in the history of the California gold diggings.

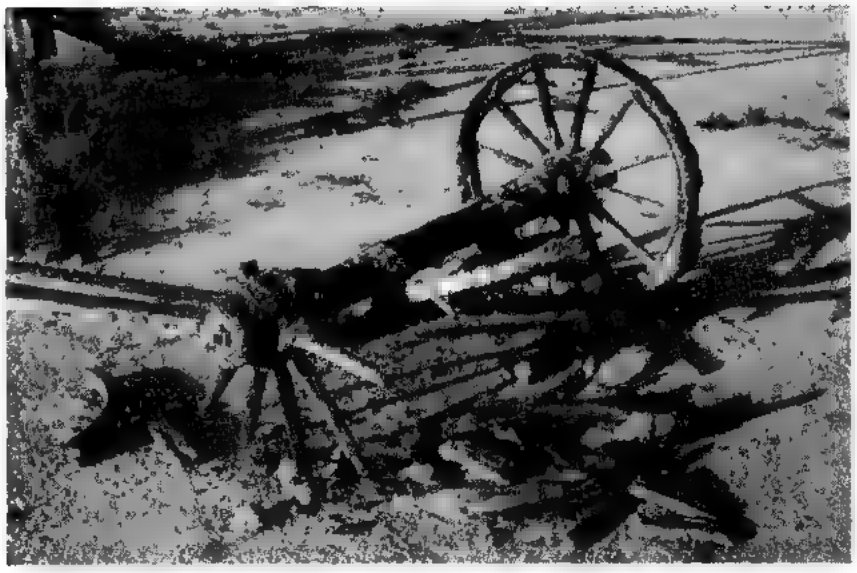
Old Oroville, though accustomed to eccentric strangers in search of small investment and large profit, took notice when Major Frank McLaughlin arrived on a balmy day in June 1879.

Gold had long since been discovered in the Feather River and all its branches, forks and tributaries; the local mining industry had settled down to almost routine. Some of the glamor and excitement of the gold rush still lingered, however, and McLaughlin was a man of grandiose schemes and tremendous ideas. As kaleidoscopic as his career, was his expensive garb, completely setting him apart from the red-shirted, grimy-trousered miners. Stubbled, whiskered jaws fell at the sight of him. An expensive cigar thrust up at an impertinent angle from beneath his black mustache, the ends waxed to needle point. A red silk scarf encircled his thick, muscular neck. Knee-high boots of kangaroo leather covered his large feet and thick lower limbs. His tailored jacket was of deep green suede. A beaver hat sat at a jaunty angle on his leonine head.

(Continued on page 66)

HORSEHEAD CROSSING

—as mysterious and as important to the Southwest as the old Pecos River itself



Above left: Partially excavated remains of a wagon found mired in the bed of the Pecos River. Right: Only the front running gear of the wagon was recoverable from Horsehead Crossing. It is now on display at the Mendoza Trail Museum, McCamey, Texas. Opposite page, top left: Historical marker erected by the State of Texas along a major highway several miles from Horsehead Crossing. Top right: The southern emigrant passed through Castle Gap just prior to reaching the Pecos River and Horsehead Crossing. Bottom: Castle Gap (arrow) is faintly visible in the distance from the bank of the Pecos River looking east across historic Horsehead Crossing.

By EUGENE R. ANDERSON

Photos Courtesy Author

DANIEL WEBSTER defined a desert as "an uninhabited region; a dry, barren, sandy wilderness," but he was not referring to the Great American Desert. As a whole this area is far from barren—dry perhaps, yet covered with a myriad of plants. Most are small but robust forests of pygmy trees, shrubs, cacti, yuccas and herbaceous plants. During the rainy periods these same desert regions are covered with a delicate carpet of wildflowers.

And one must not forget the life-sustaining oases—some in the form of small isolated pot holes of semi-permanent water; some in the form of rivers extending for a thousand miles or more. The three major rivers of the United States cutting the Great American Desert are the Pecos, the Rio Grande, and the Colorado.

It was the Pecos,' whose headwaters rise on the western slopes of the Santa Fe mountain range in New Mexico and whose terminus is in the deep gorges of southwestern Texas before joining with the Rio Grande, which constituted a barrier to the opening of the western frontier. There were few crossings on the Pecos, and even they were not always safe. If it were not the treacherous quicksand at these few crossings, it was the resistance of the Indians which made the development of the West a slow and costly endeavor, both in lives and money.

Horsehead Crossing was one of the oldest and best known of these historic crossings. Prehistoric, nomadic tribes used this crossing as they followed their ancient war trail down from the high plains to Northern Mexico to raid and pillage. Spanish explorers crossed here as did the later emigrants on their push westward.

Juan Dominguez de Mendoza was in all probability the first Spanish explorer to use Horsehead Crossing. Mendoza departed what we now know as El Paso on December 15, 1683 leading an expedition commissioned to explore as far southeastward as the Nueces River. The chronology of this expedition indicates that Mendoza crossed the Pecos in the early part of 1684.

The southern emigrant's road crossed here and continued northwest along the west bank. Great wagontrains and thousands of heads of cattle and sheep used the same crossing on the way to California.

John Butterfield chose Horsehead Crossing as a site for one of the change stations on the now famous Butterfield-Overland mail route and when the stage route was diverted to a more southerly course, the crossing was used instead of following the east bank of the Pecos northward to Popes Crossing near the Texas-New Mexico border.

Exactly how the old fording site came to be known as Horsehead is not known. There are several references to the large number of horse skulls found in the immediate area, suggesting that the name derived from them. According to the U.S. Senate Executive Documents, 31st Congress, Session I, No. 64, a Lieutenant Bryan crossed on July 10, 1849. In his report he mentioned the large number of horseheads "which lie scattered near."

John R. Bartlett, who crossed his expedition on October 20, 1850, stated in his "Personal Narrative," "I noticed a long line of horse and mule skulls placed along the bank, which gave it [the crossing] the name it bears."

As to how so many horseheads came to be found at this crossing, there are several different versions, none of which can be confirmed. One suggestion has been advanced that the crossing may have been a seasonal feasting place for the Indians, when wild horses were caught, killed and cooked. Another theory, and one bearing some logic, is that large numbers of horses died drinking the strong saline water of the Pecos when near exhaustion from the extreme heat of a long hard drive across the Llano Estacado (Staked Plains).

Emigrants, using the old trail, took advantage of the skulls to mark the location of the crossing. The snake-like course of the Pecos and its deep cut banks made the river difficult to locate until one was upon it. What better method of identification, in a land void of trees, could have been selected than the blanched skulls of hundreds of horses?

Whatever the explanation for the name, old Horsehead Crossing is almost forgotten, and an historical marker, erected by the State of Texas in 1936, mislocates the actual crossing by about two miles. It is just as well, perhaps, that the mistake was make, as the area around the present marker has been "metal-detectored" extensively by treasure hunters, without success and much to their consternation. Had the crossing been properly marked, the remains of the wagon I recently discovered might have been destroyed. Instead, what's left of the wagon, once mired in an area of occasional quicksand in the bed of the Pecos at Horsehead Crossing, has found a final resting place—the Mendoza Trail Museum at McCamey, Texas.

Exactly how this wagon came to be abandoned will forever remain a mystery. When it was excavated from the river in the fall of 1969, only the front running gear remained, the rest of the wagon having been carried away by the river.

To me it will serve as a permanent re-

(Continued on next page)

Above: The author cleaning one of the partially exposed wheels of a wagon mired in the bed of the Pecos River at Horsehead Crossing. Below: Pointing to the top of one of the exposed wagon wheels prior to its excavation. The whisk broom is just below the other.

minder of historic Horsehead Crossing, for it was here the early-day emigrants had their first taste of the great desert regions yet to be crossed in their westward trek toward California.

Western Book Roundup

(Continued from page 29)

$12.50) by Doctor Thomas B. Hall is a slender volume of only 160 pages but it is fact-packed and worthwhile. The importance of the Santa Fe Trail and the commerce that flowed over it is too well known to dwell on here. However, Dr. Hall has attacked a little known phase of the Trail's history and added to our knowledge of the problems encountered on it. The edition of 1,000 copies was numbered and signed by Dr. Hall. Recommended.

INDIAN LEADERS

The fourth edition of *Indians of Today* (I.C.F.P. Inc., $6.95), compiled and edited by Marion E. Gridley, is a reference volume of quite considerable value. In it appear brief biographical sketches of nearly three hundred Indian leaders in many fields "who have made significant contributions to the lives of their people and to the Nation," to quote Louis R. Bruce, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, who wrote the foreword. Only those persons having at least one-fourth Indian blood are included and many tribes (including the Eskimos and a few from Canada) are represented. A photo usually appears with the biographical sketch and there is a good selection of Indian art featuring reproductions of the work of such talented artists as Harrison Begay, Beatien Yazz, Woody Crumbo, Brummett Echohawk and Allan Houser. The one serious criticism of the book is the seeming lack of a publishing plan—the biographies are not arranged alphabetically or by tribes or professions. The alphabetical index is certainly helpful but if you, for example, wanted to determine (and read about) the Indian authors included, you are on your own with a 500 page volume. Despite this defect—worthwhile.

Frontier Post

(Continued from page 4)

young ones. They were partly broken for work animals and saddle stock. There were several big sheep outfits in that country at the time, including one from California. There were no fences after one left the valley, all the way to the mountains. There were a few isolated homesteaders trying to make a go of it but that sure wasn't farming country.

We had to compete with the sheep for grass and also keep our horses off the homesteads. In order to hold our range, we had to spend a lot of time riding the hills chasing sheep off our grass. My three brothers (all dead now) were working out most of the time, so it was my job to ride out frequently and keep track of the horses.

One morning in the fall of 1914 I saddled a little old gray pony which was kept in the corral at the barn for this purpose. About two miles from the buildings I found the horses and, on making a count, I found eight head of the best ones missing. After covering a lot of the ground they ranged on, I had found no trace of them. On returning to the herd, I found where they had been run over the hills and into what was known as Rye Coulee. I knew that they had been run off, as there were tracks of two shod horses and none of our horses were shod. I tracked them down through Rye Coulee and through a homesteader's place (who was not home) at the mouth of the coulee. At the edge of the valley was a road which went from Emmet over the Divide to the town of Caldwell, where I lost the tracks.

When my brothers came home that evening it was too late to do anything. The next morning my two oldest brothers saddled up two horses and, armed with Winchester rifles, rode all that day but found no trace of the missing horses. The next day they rode over to Caldwell in the Boise Valley, which was the county seat, and reported the loss to the county sheriff. After two weeks had passed without any word or trace of the horses, one evening a rancher from the valley rode up to our place and said he had heard that we had lost some horses.

Near his ranch was an island of about seven or eight hundred acres in the Payette River, which was an old abandoned ranch. He said there were some horses on the island which had been there for some time. My brothers saddled up the next morning, took their Winchesters and started out to have a look-see. This island was about four or five miles from Emmet. I wanted to go along but, being a kid, they said I might get hurt and wouldn't let me go. On reaching the island they had to ford the river, as there was no bridge. Sure enough, there were our horses. They scouted the island, but there was no trace of anyone on it, so they drove the horses back across the river and to the ranch.

On reporting the recovery of the horses to the sheriff at Caldwell he said that considering the circumstances under which they were found, he felt that the thieves had taken them to the island with the intention of just leaving them there until they thought it would be safe to take them to Caldwell and sell them at the big livestock auction sale. The rabies epidemic was then at its height and had just about exterminated the coyotes and also the dogs. People never went outdoors without a gun and a lantern at night. So, with the rabies menace plus the fight to hold our grass against the woollies, we said, "To heck with it." On the 25th of April, 1915 we rigged up three wagons with covers, grub and other supplies and pointed them toward the Continental Divide and Montana.—Harvey DeVaule, 3831 Pacific Avenue, Space 1, Forest Grove, Oregon 97116

Texas Boyhood

Well, I'm sitting here this Thanksgiving day looking over some of my old copies of your magazines and thinking in between of all I have to be thankful for. I want to extend my personal thanks for all the old turn-of-the-century (and before) photos of old West Texas—those of old Sonora, Del Rio, San Angelo—and all those stories about the Pecos River country—they are worth a million in gold to me, as that is where I grew up. It sure is heartwarming to drift back in time!

You know, the "Old" West hasn't been tamed for very long though; maybe parts of it still aren't. And there is one very important part of the history of

(Continued on page 42)

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THE STOLEN CLAIM

By M. L. CAYA

Illustrated by Paul Hudgins

JAMES STERLING was a tall, powerfully built man. He was thought to be a sober and hard-working man. Born in Pennsylvania in 1827, and living for a time in Illinois, Jim headed west when he was twenty-six, taking his mother, Elizabeth Sterling, a sister, Lucinda, and a younger brother, Richard, with him.

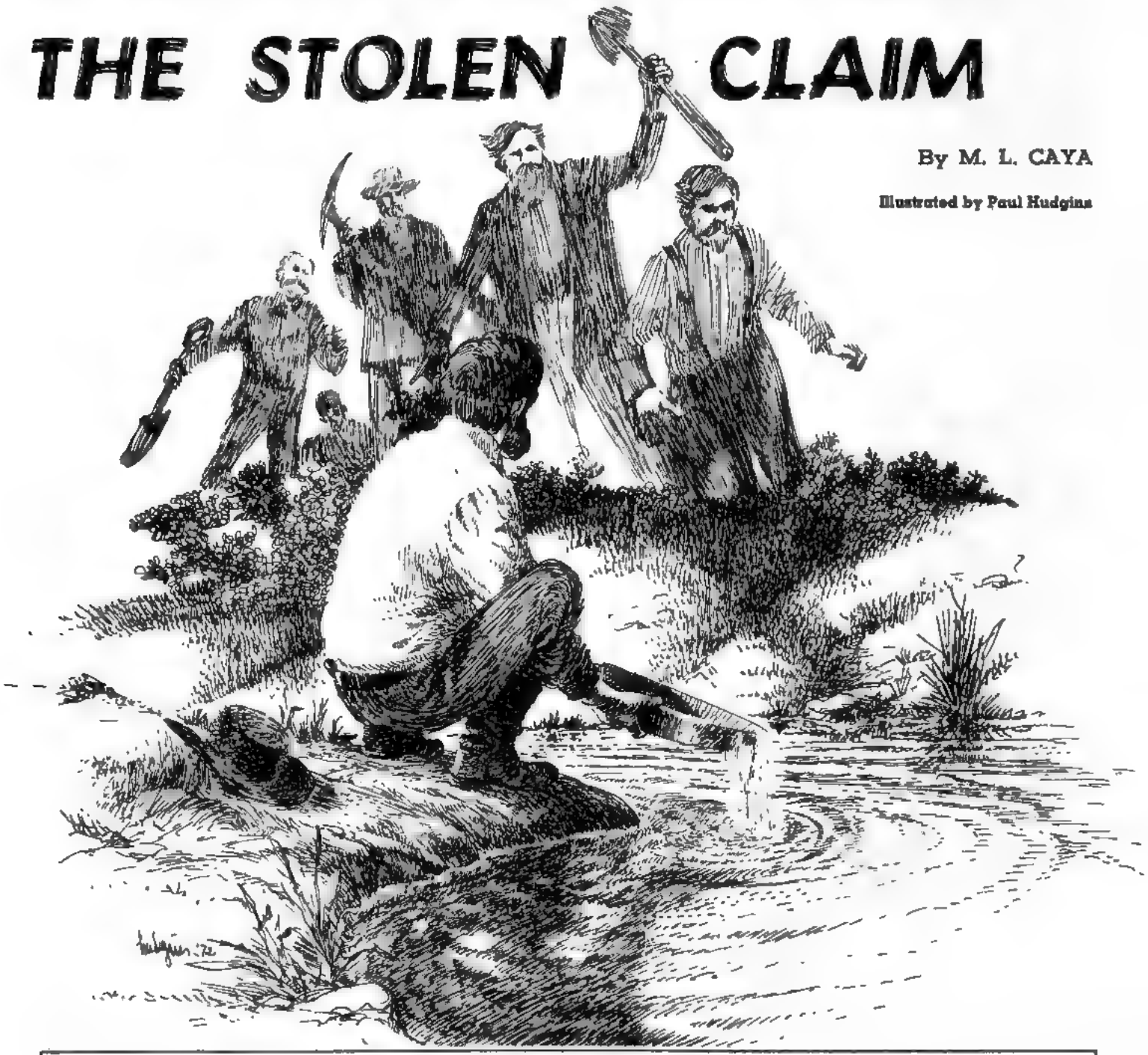
The Sterling family settled in Eden Precinct, Oregon, which is now named Phoenix. The town had been formed by a group of farmers who had gathered around the mining claims of the Colver brothers. These men became farmer-miners. They would have their crops planted by the middle of May and then go to their claims in the hills to work until the crops ripened.

Jim held a donation land claim on Jackson Creek which he worked with a partner, Aaron Davis. In the spring of 1854, the two men went to their claim as soon as the crops were in. They planned to pan for gold until the water dried up. Pocket mining did not become popular until later.

When they arrived at Jackson Creek, someone else was working their claim. In most areas, claims were not "jumpable" from April until October, but this arrangement did not seem to apply at Jackson Creek.

Jim and Aaron decided to return to the farm as nothing could be done about getting their claim back. They took an Indian trail up one of the tributaries of the Little Applegate River. The trail went over the top of a hill and on to Coleman Creek, which flowed to within a short distance of the Sterling farm. In 1854 the Modoc and Klamath Indians were not on friendly terms with the whites. One of the Indian camps was close to the trail.

(Continued on next page)



What is more bitter to a prospector—never to find gold at all or to find it and lose it by treachery?

The two men reached Coleman Creek and kept going until they were half-way up before stopping for the noon meal. After he ate, Jim started poking around in a hole left by an uprooted tree. That was his favorite method of prospecting as it gave him easy access to the gravel below. Unexpectedly, Jim found a heavy showing of gold in his pan, and soon he and Aaron realized they had made a rich strike.

With the Indians so close by the partners could not remain there alone or without more supplies and equipment; so they took what gold they had found and hurried on to the farm.

JIM asked three friends to come with them to explore the area of the strike. These men were George Rockafellow, J. P. Burns, and John Bonum. The five started out June 1, 1854. They spent a day and a half prospecting and washed out $48 in gold. One piece weighed out at $12. All agreed to keep the site a secret and to return the following Tuesday with adequate equipment. Tuesday was an election day and the men wanted to vote before returning to the site. They merely staked out the claims in their minds as they didn't want to leave visible evidence to attract passers-by.

Traveling down Coleman Creek on their way back to their farm, the five men passed a group of men helping to raise a house. Though Jim and his friends were very excited and would have preferred to avoid company, to pass by without helping would have caused suspicion.

It didn't take long for the others to sense the mood of excitement among the five men. One, Ab Giddings, knew Aaron Davis and he became determined to learn the "secret." Giddings finally wore Aaron down and was told of the strike. Giddings also convinced Aaron that the two of them should get supplies and return to the site early the next morning (Sunday) to stake out claims and start mining.

On Monday one of the other four men went to Jacksonville so he would be on hand to vote early Tuesday morning and then leave for Coleman Creek. Unfortunately, he got drunk that evening and started talking about the strike. As soon as the location was revealed, a stampede started. Men ran out into the night and stumbled up the trail in darkness in their haste to get the best claim.

When Jim Sterling arrived at the site early Tuesday morning, after voting, he found that all of the creek had been staked out. Aaron offered Jim a half-claim as the discoverer of the mine. (The usual portion was a claim and a half or two claims.) Jim refused, furious with his partner, and merely took the gold he had panned on the day he discovered the mine and left.

Although the stream took his name, Sterling Creek, and the town of Sterlingville was soon formed, Jim turned his farm over to his brother-in-law, Allen Lee, and moved to Cottonwood Creek where he owned land just north of the California line. Jim filed for a water right there in 1870.

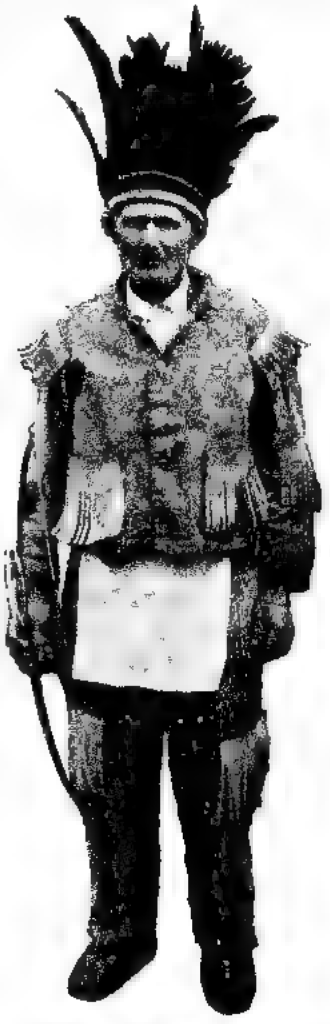
When Mrs. Sterling became too old to remain on the farm, Jim sold it and bought a house in Cottonwood, California, later named Henley. Frequently he went up into the mountains to prospect for gold—but always without a partner. Following his mother's death, Jim turned entirely to prospecting. He made a strike on Hungry Creek, California in 1892, discovering a quartz lead almost eight feet wide. It assayed at $8 to $12 a ton and became richer as it went into the mountain. Jim spent several years working the mine by himself with only occasional help from boys in the summer. In 1897 he bought a home near his mine to live in during the winter.

Three years later Jim sold the mine to a promoter named Fore for $17,500 (Fore resold the mine for $42,000) and went to live with Lucinda, now widowed and living in Yreka. He died there on June 5, 1903 at the age of seventy-six. Jim's estate amounted to only $1,165.80, a meager reward for a man who had discovered the rich Sterling Creek mining district in Oregon.

Many people living along Sterling Creek believed that James Sterling owned the entire creek, and had sold out and returned to the East—a wealthy man. And there were other stories equally erroneous. The Ashland *Tidings* newspaper, on January 22, 1900, printed an article about the discovery of gold on Sterling Creek. It stated that Sterling himself was the one who had gotten drunk in Jacksonville and let the news out about the strike. What the paper didn't print was that James Sterling's home was in Eden Precinct and he wouldn't have voted in Jacksonville.

James Sterling's name does not appear in many historical publications. Only the vast research of Francis D. Haines, Jr. and Vern S. Smith gives us what little we know about the betrayed Pennsylvanian. Numerous unknown facts lie in an unmarked grave in an old cemetery in Yreka, California.

THE LAST CAPTIVE



By A. C. Greene

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Bully of the Town

(Continued from page 17)

rage. Suddenly he ordered another whiskey and deliberately dashed it in the stranger's face.

Perhaps the man at the bar was unaware of just how much Gerren valued his reputation as a dangerous man—or maybe he knew and just didn't care. He did express his feelings, however, with a shower of quick blows that sent the deputy reeling through the door. Then discovering that Gerren's hat was on the floor, the stranger ran outside, caught his tormenter, and marched him back inside. Here he made Gerren pick up his hat, faced him again toward the street and placed a mighty kick that sent him sprawling. Gerren was armed with two guns, and the stranger was probably armed also, but at no time did he resort to anything but his fast two fists.

The stranger, as it turned out, was taking some horses to Dallas from his ranch at Bowie and just stopped in Denton to rest himself and his horses (which goes to prove that a fearless man looks like most other men). This unprovoked abuse on a visitor was reported to the sheriff who promptly located Gerren and, after giving him a sound cursing, fired him.

SHERIFF EGAN had known just where to find his deputy, because Gerren spent a lot of time at the home of a young woman named Mary Shea (or Shay) who rented a house where the gin later was built. She was a woman of mystery, with dark skin and hair, thought by some to be a gypsy, by others a quadroon, by still others an Indian or half-breed. It was to her that Gerren turned after being fired.

Mary took on the task of supporting him, as he made no move to seek employment. She did sewing, washing, and ironing, and between times made exquisite lace. Ladies from uptown would drive down to Mary's and pay fantastic prices for her hand-made laces. A bridal cap, yellowed but beautiful, which Mary had made up on special order, was known to exist just a few years back.

During the following months a son was born to Mary, and later a daughter who lived only a short time. Gerren, still jobless, was scheming all the while to land a position which he considered a great step upward.

The railroad had reached Denton and with it stories of the derring-do of a new type of officer—the railroad Special Agent. This, Gerren decided, was for him and he set in motion a plan which would not only secure him such a position but also would bolster his fast fading reputation as a fearless gunman. His overpowering desire for such a job became a fixation; he thought and talked of little else as a workable scheme emerged from his twisted thinking.

Gerren selected for a dupe in this game a poor, trusting young man who had deserted his parents' grubby little farm east of town for the glamour of town life. He eked out a bare living by running errands, delivering messages, and doing an occasional odd job. He was allowed to sleep in the tiny station during cold or rainy weather, having no other abode. This boy was named Bill Baines, and it was on him that Gerren's self-improvement plan rested.

Billy was highly flattered when a man, even one of low reputation, began to show him small favors, and who, on occasion, would buy him a meal which he could eat seated at a table. Gerren's next move was to confide to Billy that he was cutting him in on a deal which would make them both rich. He patiently explained his plan to rob the express car on the northbound 9:05. The month being July, both knew that the express car ran with both doors open.

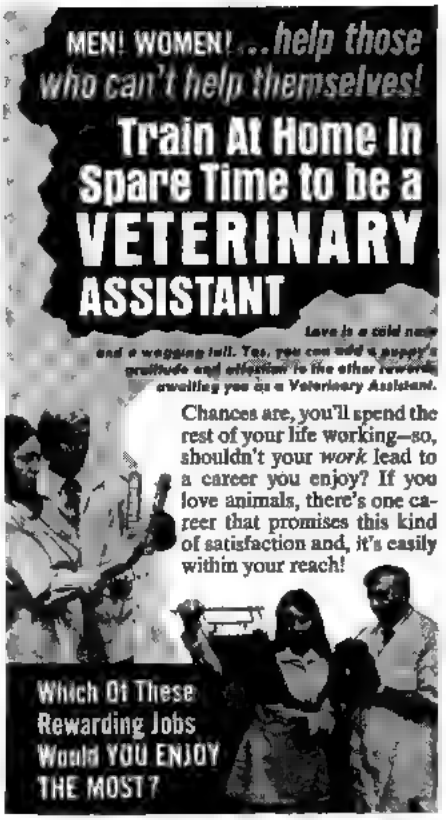
As masterminded by Gerren, Billy was to join the ex-deputy just after dark in a buggy and be taken to Peach Orchard Hill just north of town where he would jump into the express car while the train was creeping up the grade. Billy would cover the messenger and throw out all the bags. Gerren, it was understood, would be close by and they would gather the loot and race for town to establish an alibi.

With everything set, Gerren then alerted the railroad people to an impending robbery. He would give no details but offered to act as guard himself, and the railroad people agreed. On the fatal night, Gerren drove Billy to the hill, having supplied the youth with an Owl Head pistol from which he had thoughtfully removed the firing pin. Gerren then drove hard to the station in time to slip into the express car from the off-side and conceal himself. At the appointed place, poor Billy leaped in and ordered the messenger to reach. At that moment, he was felled by three slugs and rolled dead onto the right-of-way, his useless gun grasped in his hand.

For several days Gerren was applauded by some as a hero and he put on the pressure to become a Special Agent at once. The railroad heads were cautious, however, and set in motion a thorough investigation into Gerren's past. Nothing they learned was reassuring. Mary Shea, sensing Gerren's approaching downfall, fled one night with her son. Word later drifted back that she had been killed by a jealous lover in the Indian Territory, her only child accidentally hit and killed too.

Gerren, himself apprehensive now, disappeared a few nights after Mary's departure. The entire picture was laid before investigators, but it was decided that a charge of murder could not be supported since Billy Baines, the only witness who could testify to Tom's foul plot, was dead and buried.

Several years later a barber from Denton was visiting relatives in a village on the Gulf near Houston. The barber, a Mr. Watts, reported on his return that he had seen the would-be gunman there, engaged in the business of peddling assorted vegetables house-to-house from a push cart. It is possible that Gerren had at last found the very career for which he was best fitted, though it cost two lives and several years in the process.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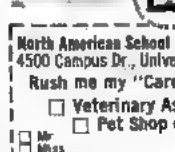

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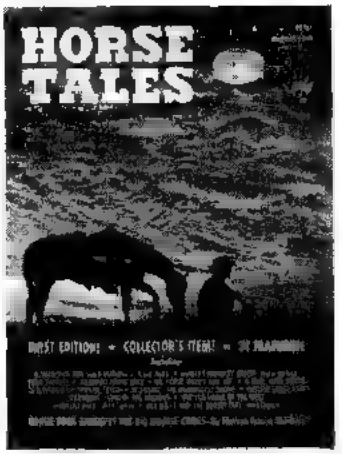

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Frontier Post

(Continued from page 38)

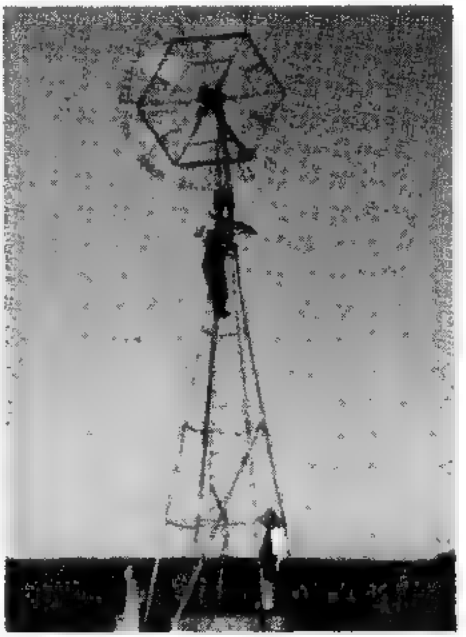
Texas that very rarely gets mentioned in any stories or books about the state and that is the elimination of *some* of those horrible cacti from the hills, not only so that there'd be better grazing but also to get rid of some of the nests and hiding places for the rattlers and scorpions and vinegarroons. Just hearing the names of them makes a sane man want to stay away from there— the *manco-caballo* (horse-lamer), the *uno del gato* (cat's claw); also *tasajillo, lechuguilla, pitaya* and others.

In 1941, as I was about to turn nine, it was in the month of May and the days were very hot and dry in Ozona, my home town. An uncle of mine came and told my mother, "Why not let the boy come up to the hills and be my water boy? He is big enough to carry the morrals (2½-gallon canvas water bags), I'll pay him $1.50 a day, sun-up to sundown, and grub three times a day. School is out tomorrow; Monday the 3rd of May he can have his bedroll and cot ready to go. Okay? Then I'll bring him back around the 23rd of September and he can go back to school. And if he is a good worker, I'll give him work during weekends and holidays after that."

Well, I was the oldest of an ever-growing family, still recovering from the blow we got during the depression, and I never cared how much I was making. Now and then Mom would send up some canvas trousers or another shirt and you can imagine how thrilled I was to be out there in the hills, among the best of good men—the *nopaleros* (cactus diggers) who bent their backs in the sun all day, rooting out the stubborn cactus with grub hoes; and the *orgulleros* who made piles of green cacti with their pitchforks on natural slabs of rock, where they'd dry so they could be burned. And let me tell you, after years of wielding those pitchforks those guys were experts. I can't count all the rattlesnakes I've seen speared to death on the end of a fork, and believe it or not, I watched a fellow named Macho Prieto hurl the fork like a javelin lance and kill a big deer that wandered too close to camp.

Of course, many of those boys carried pistols or daggers for "their own protection" and I wound up witnessing many a terrible fight, and once in a while, a wetback on the dodge from the authorities on one side or another of the border would drift into camp and make life even more interesting. Now that I think about it, it's a wonder I'm here today to talk about it. The caves and canyons full of javelina hogs we stirred up, the millions of snakes and poisonous insects and crawling creatures like the scorpions—but I never once was bitten and very few of the guys ever suffered from any of these dangers.

Anyhow, I'll never forget the day I got paid—cash money. I had been out there 119 days and he paid me $178.50 plus a $21.00 bonus for staying on. That was my first paycheck and I've never been out of work for long since then. Maybe not the best paying jobs but always interesting, and the experience I've gained, the wondrous things I've seen would fill a book. Now I own my own ranch here just beneath the Cascade Mountains foothills, but when we're not too busy the whole family loves to head for the hills for some fishing or hunting or "relicking" and even prospecting—but mainly, just getting out in one of the few places where there are no fences, stinking factories, etc.—the *real* last remains of the wild West.—Dan Leal, Route 3, Box 172, Scio, Oregon



This windmill is located on a ranch southeast of Alva, Oklahoma and has been in service since the late 1920s or early '30s. Lower shows a closeup of the wheel closed in a strong wind.

Woodmansee Windmill

In the March 1972 Frontier Post section, I saw a request for a picture of an old Woodmansee windmill and as I knew where one is located, I sent a picture of it to the letter-writer.

I thought perhaps other readers might be interested in seeing a photo of this windmill. The Woodmansee windmill was an all wood wheel and the only windmill that could be turned on in a high wind, as it would regulate its speed without tearing to pieces. It had no vane, as we call it, but faced away from the direction of wind and in a real hard one, would close up as in the picture I have. It would run only so fast. It was a direct drive and every time the wheel turned, it would pump a stroke of plunger or wood rods. It also ran in the slightest wind.—J. Harrel Patterson, Box 55, Longdale, Oklahoma 73755

Knew Milt Hinkle

Today I paid my last respects to a man who has been writing for your magazines for many years, Milt Hinkle, whom I first met a few years ago in a hospital at St. Cloud, Florida. We had many things in

(Continued on page 44)

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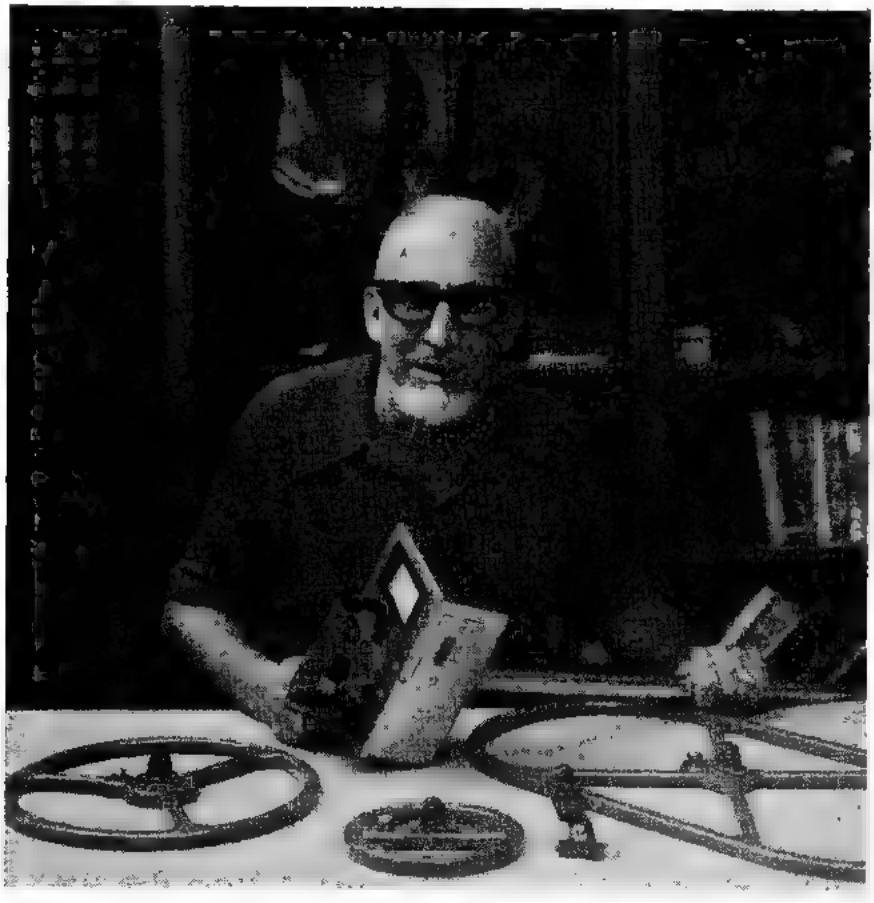

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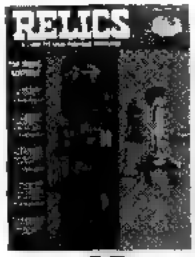
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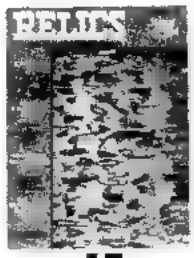
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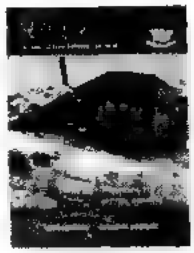
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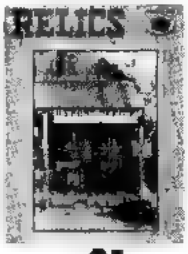
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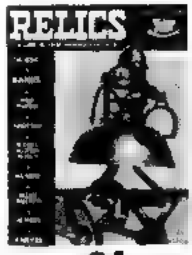
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Frontier Post

(Continued from page 42)

common, we found. One I recall—we were at the same roundup in Cheyenne, Wyoming in the summer of 1910.

On the last occasion that we talked (early in February, this year), my wife and I drove to Kissimmee to see Milt and I found him feeling pretty well for a ninety-year-old. His mind was very snappy and we had a nice visit.

I have read many of his stories for several years and enjoyed them all. Milt was eight years older than myself but we had been through many of the same experiences over the years. So long, old-timer—peace be with you.—W. C. Reynolds, 611 Bryn Mawr, Orlando, Florida 32804

Reader in Picture

The September 1970 issue contains the article, "Sixty Years Ago on the Kootenai." I am the girl in the front row on the right in the picture of the school.—Mrs. Ruth Bristow Burkett, 17321 Riviera Drive, Blythe, California 92225

Sierritas Railroad

This is in reference to the story "Ghost of the Sierritas," in the January 1972 issue. That was just like a letter from home—made me feel real good.

I broke on that railroad three or four times. I was a kid boomer then. R. W. (Granny) Morris was the conductor. Great old man he was, too. That was a good little railroad.

Every railroad has its own peculiarity. On this pike the peculiarity was that it was one of the few places in the country where it was necessary to make a dutch drop every day at the mine in order to get the train around the engine. The lack of track length made it mighty close shaving sometimes—making that maneuver.

Granny Morris and I got along fine and after the first time I broke for him he knew I was a good brakeman and when I broke for him later he always put me on the parlor.

It was also on this line that I had one of my first loves or infatuations. The weigh clerk at the mine was one of the most beautiful girls I have ever seen. I don't remember her name now and I hadn't thought of her until I read this story.

Many a year has gone by since I brought a train out of the hills to Sahuarita but in my mind it seems like only a short time ago. I still visualize every mile and every car. There is mention made of the wood from Canoa. Ha! I will not forget the night there, either.—Leo E. Broadstreet, Box 605, Central, New Mexico 88026

Curly Bill

Your publication and colored front covers are great—especially liked the March cover of the area near Safford, Arizona, by Darwin Van Campen. I was born in Douglas, Arizona; lived on a ranch in the Chiricahua Mountains. As I am doing a lot of research on Cochise County, 1880-1883, I desire any information relevant to any of the Curly Bill gang and their participation in the Skeleton Canyon—Davis Mountains—Monterrey treasure massacre.

Also, would like any history of Mud Springs (not Mud Springs Ranch, the Springs themselves). Would like any history prior to 1900. There is one old building there which I am interested in—as to how long it has been at the Springs and who built it.

Mud Springs is located between the town of Douglas and the Swisshelm Mountains in southern Arizona.—Mrs. Russell Heffner, 525 Masefield Drive, Pleasant Hill, California 94523

The Monterrey treasure story is tentatively scheduled for the December 1972 TRUE WEST.

Another Veterinarian Writes

This concerns the letter written by Mr. H. Tyler of Stockton, California which appeared in the March 1971 issue, to a reply by a veterinarian, Dr. Phillip T. Smith of Billings, Montana printed in the March 1972 issue.

First, I will tell you that I am a professional horseman and exhibition rider (or was) and have been over, under, and around horses since I was old enough to walk. I am also a graduate veterinarian. Now, I'll make a bet that Mr. Tyler is right when he says that horses that crib and those that continually kick in their stalls have aching teeth and am jes' plumb disgusted with myself for not ever having thought of it before. Wish Mr. Tyler could have told me that sixty years ago. I am seventy-seven now. I intend to prove or disprove the idea this coming summer. Dr. Smith quotes Steadman's Dictionary on the matter. The definition given was written many years ago and new information on many things is continually being uncovered. He also gives me the impression that he considers the matter closed when he quotes Steadman. Well, it is not closed for me. Fifteen years ago the veterinary profession claimed that white muscle disease of calves was caused by a lack of vitamin E in the feed of the mother cow; but along about 1960 an Oregon Experiment Station proved that it was caused by a lack of the element selenium in the feed. When I was a pup, the medical profession claimed when anyone died of appendicitis he died of inflammation of the bowel. So, I say let's look into this matter of aching teeth in cribbers and kickers and if Mr. Tyler is right, and I believe he is, he should be awarded at least the fur-lined bathtub.—Charles O. Williamson, D.V.M., Box 506, Hamilton, Montana 59840

Silkville

With reference to "A Report on Silkville" in the March 1972 issue, my first visit to "the grove" was fifty-three years ago. I was around six. Wonderful memories. We donned our oldest clothes. The Model T touring car was cranked up and in piled my parents, grandparents, two older brothers and I, along with a sack of old clean sheets, baskets, buckets and lard pails, rope, a creamery can of fresh water and a huge picnic hamper.

I was pouting about having to wear an old dress to go someplace, but soon became more concerned with the conversation. They talked of some man who had had more money than sense, growing trees to feed worms!

My vision of giant fat worms gnawing at tree trunks was soon forgotten when we arrived. Birds a-twitter, soft grass, wild flowers and blessed cool shade after the hot, dusty, windy ride were pure delight.

The sheets were spread under the trees which the boys climbed to shake the ripe, lush berries down. After eating my fill, Mother gave me the lard pails to fill. I must do my part. When everything was filled, the buckets were tied onto the car with rope. While the lunch was being spread, we kids explored. After eating we took a nap on the cool grass. We must have been a sight to behold—buckets thumping, berry-stained, windblown, a tired, but happy family after our outing. And, oh, the goodies from those berries! Fresh with cream, jams, pies, a filling for cakes, canned like a sauce, puddings—and plans to go again next year.

I have often wondered who planted the groves. Now I know. At that time, the owner had returned to his homeland and no one seemed to know what would happen to the land. Your magazine is a boon to us oldsters. We pass our copy on to an aunt who sends it on to a cousin nearing the 100-year-old mark. Many wonderful memories are brought to mind. —Mrs. G. Garwood, 503 Arch, Aransas Pass, Texas 78336

Monte Cristo

Read with interest "Timberline Kate" in the May '72 issue. In 1963 or 1964 I borrowed a friend's mining handbook, and on the fly leaf was a signature of the date 1900. In the book were references to Monte Cristo. One was about the ore—a rich mixture of gold-silver-copper-lead in quartz; a large quantity in area—a very promising mining district. Another was about an unusual form of iron pyrite that decomposed in air, releasing a corrosive gas.

On impulse, in 1967, after seeing Monte Cristo on a road map, I drove up. There was a good road in. On our arrival we saw mine tunnels in the hillside, a railroad turntable, a larger building which was a museum, a gift shop, restaurant, and living quarters for caretakers; up behind the larger building was a row of smaller buildings with a board sidewalk in front. (Dumas Street). The small buildings had very steep, smooth sheet-iron roofs.

The area is a resort, well maintained, with signs showing what was where or had been there. Behind Dumas Street

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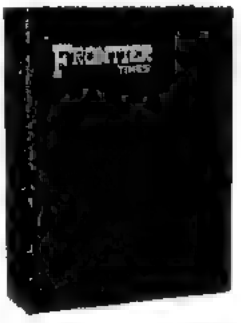

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one could see where a concentrator stood. There was no regrowth or evergreen trees, probably due to the high arsenic content of the ground where the concentrator stood. Farther back from the concentrator was another tunnel and remains of an ore bin. Looking across the canyon, we saw a mine tunnel way up on a cliff. A ledge or shelf was in front and alongside the tunnel.

According to a history of Monte Cristo I purchased at the gift shop, there was a bucket running on a cable from the tunnel down to the concentrator to carry ore. On a ledge by and in front was an ore bucket, bunkhouse, and blacksmith shop. The crew hiked out from town on a trail, then climbed a wooden ladder 400 to 500 feet to the ledge. The ladder was fastened to the cliff face with iron pins.

From 500 to 600 acres in this area belong to some people in Seattle who keep it up for an historical site. They were working toward making it a ski resort. It has good slopes and 25 feet of snow is average in the winter. The ground is covered from October to May or June.

One can see lots of forgotten history there—battles with snow, rock slides, high fast water from the spring thaw and freshets.

One of the caretakers asked where I was from and how I'd heard of Monte Cristo. I told him of the book, sent them photo copies of the book cover, fly leaf with signature and date, and cover leaf and pages in the book mentioning Monte Cristo.

The fellow running the gift shop said the large building was built in 1915 by a Boston group for a cook house. Said it had different operations—none of which did much better than break even. Lots of arsenic. The smelter at Everett, Washington was the only part of the operation that paid off. A friend here said his grandfather worked there at one time when following mining camps. His grandfather said it was the roughest, toughest place he had ever been. He came from Indian Territory, Oklahoma.

A couple of years later I was talking with a civil engineer who worked for a railroad. He told of an engineering school using the Monto Cristo Railroad for a classroom and field training on how to overcome the impossible. He told of "Poodle Dog Pass," the first way in, being used today by hikers for an endurance test. A lot of supplies went in that way, carried by men and pack horses.

In 1943 I saw some slag from the smelter at Everett. I was working at an experimental rock wool plant in Seattle. Plant operators were trying slag for making insulation. It didn't make a very good grade.—Mike Kohle, Box 77, Cascade Locks, Oregon 97014

More on Sherman Cyclone

I read Frontier Post in the September 1971 issue and was amazed to see pictures of the cyclones in that early time. The article on page 11, "Sherman Cyclone Wrought Havoc," was of special interest to me, as my father and his parents were living on the outskirts of Sherman at this time (1896). I have often heard my father, who was then a young boy of thirteen years, tell some of the things that happened. One instance which has always stood out in my mind was the finding of a baby boy that had been blown into a tree or some shrubbery. They could not find who the child belonged to and another couple took the child to raise. They named him Cyclone Bill.

My grandfather and his family left there in 1900 and I have heard Dad's father and mother often wonder if they ever found who the boy was. I would like to hear from anyone who knows anything about this, as over the years it has always been a little mystery to us children.

I read all of your magazines and do enjoy all of them.—Lucille S. Beem, 446 W. Whitman, Apt. 318, Pocatello, Idaho 83201

Coyote Peak Story

I am writing to tell you how much I enjoyed reading my grandparents' story in your March issue—"The Legend of Coyote Peak" on page 28. The picture of the old log house took so good. I was born and raised within four miles of Grandma's home and the country was pretty wild then. I am seventy-six now.

One of my cousins here in California saw the article first and phoned me and my sister. We went out and bought up all the copies we could find and mailed them to our Texas relatives, as well as our kids. We played on those gravestones lots of time, as they lay in the open hallway for years. They were not put up until after Grandpa died and Grandma had the son's body moved to the cemetery and put by Grandpa and our other relatives.—Mrs. Buna Teston, 818 South Howard Street, Corona, California 91720

Alaska Bound

(Continued from page 9)

an easy time—easy till a few big ones would lodge right at the end and more would start piling up behind it. Then he had to go down below on the dump with a long crowbar and attempt to start a small avalanche that would clean out the jam in one fell swoop. This necessitated getting right in front of the mouth of the flume.

Every so often a big one would come lumbering through about the size of a kitchen range and whenever that happened he would respectfully step to one side and bow as His Majesty rumbled by. The big ones would always signal when they were coming—boomp, boomp, boomp—so one could jump for safety. We wore hip boots and slickers but it was impossible to keep dry, though we did keep warm.

One might suppose those polished wet rocks were slippery but they were scoured clean and our boots stuck like they were glued. This was fortunate for I have been on that tailing pile when the whole thing would start to slide as some big one came out of the end of the flume and struck with a force of several tons. At such times I had to do a ballet dance; and those boots had to stay where I intended they should when I stepped around on that hill of sliding boulders to keep from becoming a part of the dump myself. But it still was fun.

Kenneth Gideon, 1918.

A box length was twelve feet. This unit was used in the big flume in the cut—a huge affair four feet square in cross section—as well as in the case of the small cleanup boxes, the latter only a foot wide and about ten inches high. The big flume was lined with hemlock blocks cut fourteen inches long and standing on end. Headless nails were driven into the side of each block, and another block driven onto these nails and the whole fastened down by a plank spiked along the top of the slide row against the side of the flume. What would hold down the side would hold all in place since they were all locked together by the headless nails. The first three or four boxes were made watertight by lining with dressed lumber. For the rest of the distance the big flume was a rough affair, designed only to carry off the tailings.

Gold doesn't travel far even in fast water but settles behind the first projection that will form a pocket of still water. Wear and tear was terrific, for that gravel-laden water acted as a perfect grinding compound, and the hemlock blocks had to be constantly replaced. At cleanup time the blocks were taken out of the first three or four boxes and tossed out on the bank to dry, first being washed carefully in the flume. Later they would be split up and burned in the body of a wheelbarrow and the ashes panned out.

When these blocks were taken out of the flume the bottom would be covered with a fine black gravel. A very small stream of water was then turned into the cut, one that would barely cover the bottom of the flume, and just strong enough to move the gravel slightly. Several men with brooms then started sweeping the gravel uphill against that fine stream of water.

It looked like somebody must be crazy but as the gravel was brushed ahead and then washed back down again, a most

Mrs. Kenneth Gideon, 1918.

astonishing thing began to happen. A yellow line appeared at the top edge of the gravel on the bottom of the flume. The men kept on sweeping and the line kept widening, first an inch or so, then several inches, then a foot or more until finally several feet of the flume bottom was a thin sheet of solid gold particles of all sizes. Standing there on that gold carpet was a thrill you'd never forget, and when you reached down and let a handful run through your fingers—Alaska had you.

Closely watching this operation were the owners and head men, who swept the gold into a gold pan and took it up to Dawson's cabin where they washed it once more in a small cleanup box back of the cabin. Everything with the approximate weight of gold was caught and had to be picked out. The commonest objects of this kind were musket balls, fired from Russian rifles sometime long before. Considering the wild forces that were employed to move a whole valley into the canyon below, it seemed incredible that a chance bullet fired by some hunter of early history would be sifted out of that entire mass of boulders, mud, and gravel, and recovered. But incredible or not, the method worked, else it would not have been possible to save a single nugget out of that vast amount of earth.

But rich as the pay streak was at Crow Creek, the mine could show no profit. It cost too much to get it to the point where the gold could be swept up on the bottom of the flume. After Dawson died, the new operators moved the pipeline over back of the camp and sluiced the bench down into the cut, once more filling the old channel that had required several years of titanic effort and tens of thousands of dollars to sluice out. Where the cookshack stood, the new owner found a nugget weighing about an ounce and a half which he put on his watch chain. What is left of the pay streak in the upper creek is now buried as deep as it was before the whole operation began.

THE first time I saw Bill Cassidy, he was walking down the trail on the side of the cut. He wasn't exactly walking—Bill never walked. It was a combination of a stride and a strut in short steps, and he carried his head slightly to one side, for no apparent reason. He was probably the homeliest man in Alaska, but I have yet to see the man who would so classify him to his face. At some time in the past some adversary had evidently attempted to trim Bill down to his size with a pick handle or a four-pound sledge or some other similar instrument, and after it was over they forgot to put Bill's nose back in its proper place so that the effect of the whole ensemble was a slight list to port. When Bill laughed, which he seldom did—and then only as a sneer at something or someone who displeased him—he laughed with his mouth shut, heightening the resemblance he already bore to the devil. Bill wasn't as bad as he looked despite the fact that only a couple of us at the mine would associate with him. He was one of those peculiar people who, having neither wealth, background, education nor ancestry, considered himself far superior in every way, and in ways unmistakable let everyone know it. And having a disposition like a lopsided emery wheel, he got away with it.

The only way to get along with him was to ignore his idiosyncrasies, or best him, if possible, in whatever battle of wits might arise. He was an Australian by birth, and the time of which I am writing was the summer of 1914. There was a crew of about twenty-five or thirty men at the camp and among them was a young, stocky, blond German chap by the name of Karl. At another camp in another part of the world another German by the name of Hohenzollern, in August of that same summer, started the right flank of his crew on a mighty swing across Belgium. Among others who took exception to this was Bill Cassidy.

Bill didn't head for the nearest recruiting office, but then neither did any of the rest of us. But an interesting phenomenon took place up there in that mining camp. Bill made himself so objectionable that the whole camp became pro-German and when he was absent from the bunkhouse, hope was freely expressed that the "krauts" would tie those "limeys" in a knot. Karl became the special target of Bill's spleen. The two worked the night shift together and by the time the season was over, Karl was a nervous wreck.

THE hydraulic giant was set back about three hundred feet from the upper end of the flume. The ditch that brought the water along the side of the hill was four hundred feet in elevation above the mine at its lower end. There a penstock emptied the water of the ditch into a pipe six feet in diameter which tapered down until the water came out of the nozzle of the giant in a six-inch stream

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with a force inconceivable. This mighty stream was what washed the gravel into the mouth of the flume. There was a goodly percentage of enormous boulders mixed with the pay dirt, and these, of course, had to be sluiced out of the way along with the rest.

At the upper end of the flume two "wings," so-called, were constructed of heavy timbers and placed to act as a funnel to sluice the material into the flume. While the flume itself was about four feet wide, it nevertheless frequently became blocked, so a man was stationed near the upper end to keep things rolling. On the night shift Bill would operate the giant, Karl was at the upper end of the flume, and I was down toward the tailing pile. The man at the upper end kept back seventy-five or a hundred feet out of the way of the stream and flying rocks.

If the wings became plugged, he would signal Bill, the piper, to lower the nozzle while he went up to break the jam with crowbars. That was the way it was supposed to be done, but the Kaiser had demoralized the system. Everything would run along smoothly for a while; then at some particular time while Karl was wrestling with a boulder in the wings, Bill would raise the giant again. It seems there was a confusion of signals. Karl would have to drop everything and tear down the flume for his life, while Bill would, in his imagination, wipe out a whole German regiment. At such time Bill did not even deign to notice the apparent mistake, but Karl got so he was afraid to venture near the wings unless he had a good spot to duck into.

A couple of days of piping would sluice away the light gravel, and the bottom of the cut would be littered with an accumulation of heavy boulders which were too big for the giant to handle. They had to be drilled and blasted. This operation required the whole crew, and it was really surprising how expert a bunch of men can become who have never done any drilling before. A single jack was a one-man operation. He would seat himself on the boulder, hold the steel or drill between his legs with one hand and with the other swing a three-pound hammer. In a double-jack operation the man seated on the boulder simply turned the steel while another man, or sometimes two other men, would swing heavy sledges.

Bill was swinging a sledge one day, and either through carelessness on his part or nervousness on the part of the man turning the steel, his sledge glanced off the drill and struck his partner a paralyzing blow in the leg. The effect was obviously very painful but Bill's only comment was that he hated to see a man act like a baby.

ONE NIGHT one of the crew and I had a game of checkers, and Bill was standing behind me. As a checker player I wasn't so hot, and Bill kept nudging me with his knee. At some particularly obvious opening which I failed to recognize, Bill could stand my bungling no longer. Giving me a shove, he said, "Let me play that guy!" My opponent was one of those who disliked Bill more than somewhat, and the feeling was mutual.

The two, after arranging their men, began making their moves with the same spirit they would have used if each were smacking the other with his fist. Both were mad and there was no waiting or figuring out moves between plays. It was slam-slam-slam just about as fast as the moves could be made. Neither conceded the point that it was necessary to do anything to defeat the other. As usual, Bill won, got up with a sneer, and walked off laughing.

Bill displayed the same "don't give a damn" attitude toward the bosses, and for some reason he seemed to get by, since he stayed the season out. It was easy to tell during the night when Bill was loafing; when he set the giant down in one place the resulting steady roar was a dead giveaway. At such times Bill would come up out of the cut and brew himself some coffee. But the pay-off was just that—a pay-off.

Near the close of the season a large area of the bedrock had been exposed. The bedrock in this case was shale with vertical strata worn very irregular but quite smooth. In ages past when the gold was deposited, this vertical strata had been opened somewhat, presumably by frost, and in these cracks and crevices particles of gold had lodged. This gold was very coarse, as placer gold goes, being the size of and somewhat resembling ordinary flakes of prepared breakfast food. These small nuggets had worked their way about two feet down into these crevices.

We had to start at one edge of the strata and break the slabs off, scraping the silt containing these nuggets into buckets and pans. This was very rich material, since it was the concentration of all the dirt moved up to that point, and small nuggets were to be seen lying everywhere. Bill smoked a pipe which was always going out, necessitating his reaching continually into his pocket for matches. Everybody wore hip boots, and to prevent constant and total destruction of the heavy wool socks worn within them, we cut up gunny sacks and wrapped our feet in burlap squares about 18 inches on a side. At night we took off our boots, unwrapped the burlap, and hung them and the socks on ropes strung around the bunkhouse stove. The bunks were in tiers, two-high; I had a lower near the stove and Bill had the one above me. We were both sitting on my bunk one night sort of leaning over and looking at the floor in an absent-minded sort of way, when what should I see but three small nuggets between my feet. Bill didn't dare claim them, but everyone knew where they came from. At any rate Bill must have mended the hole in his pocket, for no more stray nuggets were found.

FEW INDEED were the jobs around the mine that were done by other than man power. Often some particularly heavy chore would come up, requiring the effort of the entire crew. This would be held in abeyance till quitting time when all hands would be available and all would turn to and give a lift—all, that is, but Bill, who would look the situation over, announce that there were too many men there now, and have nothing to do with it.

At the close of the season Bill went into Anchorage, and later we heard he was over prospecting on Bear Creek. Years before, a dredge had operated there, and sometimes in work of that nature the pay streak has a bulge in it, as it were, and the buckets miss that spot. Single prospectors often prowl around in places that have been dredged and sometimes discover such a pocket and work it out. Bill came back to Anchorage with eight hundred dollars in gold he found in one of these pockets, and a small stampede started over there. But no one else found anything; Bill had just been lucky.

Somewhere I read an account of the solving of old legal mysteries—English court cases of 1600 or 1700 or earlier. They went through all the old records, searched all accounts, and often what had been an unsolved mystery three hundred years before would develop as a solved case. I was going over in my mind the story of Bill Cassidy as I saw it thirty-three years before, when all at once a dawning light struck me about that pocket on Bear Creek.

Evidently Bill's cache, picked up on the bedrock at Crow Creek, was bigger than we thought. Anyone bringing in so much virgin gold to Anchorage at that time could not help but arouse considerable suspicion. It was necessary that he give a reasonable account of it, so he waited awhile and then took a prospecting trip over to Bear Creek where there were comfortable cabins to stay in, and after searching around awhile he came back to Anchorage with his "discovery."

The last time I saw Bill was several years later in Seattle. He had a mangy dog on the end of a leash, and was walking along the waterfront. He said he had just been put out of a hotel on account of the dog.

Three years later I was in a construction camp on the new Lincoln highway we were building across the Wyoming desert. I was lying on my cot one night thumbing through one of those pulp paper detective magazines. The back page was a sort of missing persons bureau. Reading matter must have been scarce out there on the desert, for after going through the magazine, I started reading this page of missing persons. Half-way down was an item that caught my eye—"Anyone knowing the whereabouts of one Bill Cassidy, formerly of Alaska, please notify . . . ." I couldn't help him any.

But in 1924 several years after this, when I had returned to Seattle, I met Frank Cotter, an old-timer among the old-time Alaskans. His first question was—had I heard about Bill Cassidy? I had not, and he proceeded to enlighten me. Bill had gone to Texas just in time to get in on an oil boom down there and in some manner had got hold of an old claim. The whole thing was written up in *The American Weekly*, the Sunday magazine section of the Hearst papers. Oil was struck on his property, and Bill sold out for a million dollars, believe it or not.

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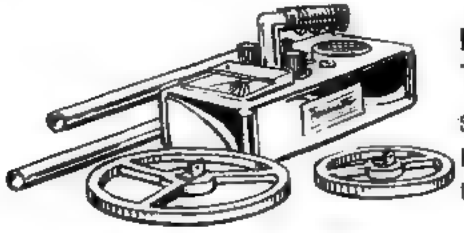

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When Horse Trading Was a Profession

(Continued from page 25)

figured he could catch some wild ranny in a weak moment, to kinda rough-ride Mister Stallion and knock a little stall sense into his ornery head.

Shout-along heard about the animal the minute he hit town. He sneaked a look at the stallion and then jaw-boned Jed into a deal, where given a week with the animal in his own corral, he would return him gentled, kitten style. Jed's fee was stud service for his string of brood mares. Jed like to broke his arm getting witnesses to the deal.

Some folks hang around horses all their life and still never learn any more about them than to yell, "Whoa" and "Giddap." A horse reasons by seeing and feeling. He answers words of command by associating them with the action that follows. Once that association is drilled through his thick skull, it sticks.

Over in the Big Rock country, Bill Towey had a trick horse he'd traded a corral of feeders for. Bill had his horse trained so that when he whistled the animal would lift the latch on his box stall with his teeth and come trotting to Bill. One summer Bill's prize horse cracked a hoof and had to be turned to range until the crack healed. The horse would show up at the home ranch every few days for a grain feed, but finally a week went by and no prize horse. Bill turned the ranch crew loose on the hunt for the animal. They found him all right, but he was hardly fit for crow bait—not with temperature about 100° in the shade and bot-flies thicker than trail dust.

Bill's horse had wandered inside a deserted squatter's cabin and the cabin door had blown shut. The door could have been pushed open easier than the latched stall gate at the home ranch, but there Mister Horse stayed and fought flies until he dropped from thirst. All because there was no whistle from Bill to set him at the gate trick.

Now, some of you old saddle-squatters are just going to bob your head and say, "Sure, that's the way a horse is built." But how many of you know the real trick of creasing a wild horse with a rifle shot? A bullet just nicking the hide at a skull spot just back of a horse's ear line will fell him like a swing from a fence-post maul. It can also kill a horse if the crease bullet is a hair too deep, for right there is a fraction of an inch of spinal cord that has no bone protection and right there is the trick spot used by most professional taming hands.

A WAR BRIDLE is the name some hands give the wraps of clothes-line rope a professional horse tamer places on an animal's head, threading the line bit-fashion over the horse's tongue and up across its neck just back of the ears. The horse psychology of the operation is simple. A bit of increasing pressure on the skull point and the horse finds himself in mental distress. If he fights and acts up, the distress gets worse. When he starts to behave himself, the trainer lets up on the war bridle and the distress disappears. That's where the animal begins using "horse sense."

Well, that's the way old Shout-along tamed Jed Franklin's outlaw stallion. In a week Shout-along had the animal as gentle as a bucket-fed calf. Jed took one look and offered to trade his stable layout for a sheep outfit.

Now just for some of you buckaroos that might think war bridling a horse is worse than raking a fear-crazed cayuse with spurs, while he bucks his guts out along with your own, here's another horse trader's trick in breaking an outlaw animal into a tradeable one. It's an old Indian trick and it's simple. You use a good strong halter and draw your outlaw's head away to one side by knotting the halter rope to his tail. Then start turning the animal in a circle until he staggers. When your horse begins to act like a drunken hay-hand, start bossing the animal around. Loosen the halter-tie and mount up. If horse sense is ever going to work, your animal is going to have to admit you're Mister Boss-Man.

Course, now, I'm not trying to take the steam out of bronc-peelin'. Those galoots that slide into leather from the top of a chute and ride 'em loose for hell and dust are artists. They're balancing in that saddle like a tight-rope walker. Those hombres are born, not made. But, let me ask you this—did you ever see one of those roundup rannies live long enough to get gray behind the ears? A few seasons of bronc peelin' and if their brains aren't scrambled, their lungs and innards are.

The whole idea of breaking a horse is to show the animal who is boss. How you do it is like skinning a cat. After the hide is off, no one cares.

OVER on Thief River old Zeke Olsen had a team of bays that were balk-ornery. When they took to a balk streak, blacksnake or bull whip couldn't budge them. One day about a mile from home, they acted up with a load of baled hay Zeke was bringing in. Zeke was a religious sort of fellow and didn't go for much cussing. That day he petted and pounded his team until he just forgot all about his religion.

Finally he decided to toss a burning ball of tumbleweed under the team. He planted his weed ball and touched a match to it. The instant the weed ball started to crackle, that ornery pair of bays took a few steps forward and stopped again. When old Zeke saw his load of hay bales start to catch fire he let out with a blast of cussing that would have done a Missouri muleskinner proud. Only trouble was, when he started his cussing Zeke had let go his team's reins to kick the burning tumbleweed clear. With Zeke's first cuss blast, those ornery bays laid back their ears and took off, burning hay load and wagon. Like that wasn't enough, when Zeke reached his home corral he found his barn burning. That team had run the burning load of hay under his wagon shed, kicked themselves clear of their harness, and ended up peacefully watching the ranch yard mess.

Zeke took the short end of a trade the next day. Said it was either sacrifice the

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bays or his religion. The balking pair was cuss-broke. At some time in the past, someone had put the Indian sign on that team, cussing.

There are a lot of simple tricks that will usually bring a horse out of a balking mood. Tying up one leg and leaving the animal standing on three legs for a while is usually a sure cure. Blindfolding the animal, tossing a handful of dust in his mouth or blowing Bull Durham in his eye, or even unhitching a team and walking them around works sometimes. Every horseman has his own pet method.

But balking isn't the worst bit of orneriness a horse can pull on a man. About the worst piece of downright meanness a horse can display is not to stand for a ground hitch, or to bolt the instant he knows he's rein free.

One fall over at the Blackfoot Indian celebration, Chuck Moe, top hand for the Tipped T outfit, got all tangled up in a horse race and let his gambling urge get the better of his horse sense. Chuck had a roping horse he thought more of than he did his shooting eye. Chuck staked the animal against a poke of jingle cash on a sleepy-eyed Indian pony that a flashy-dressed stranger, playing "Johnny-Come-Lately" to the powwow, was talking down.

Chuck lost in the staked-out race and once the flashy-dressed stranger hit saddle on Chuck's mount, the new owner knew he'd hit pay dirt. He turned down every attempt of Chuck to buy the animal back and by the time old Shout-along heard of the mess, Chuck was lower than a snake track in a wagon rut. Chuck half-sobbed out his story to Shout-along, and Shout-along agreed to see what he could do in a trade back.

Shout-along had a talk with Sheriff Pugh's youngster over near the feed tent where the flashy stranger was showing off his win-prize. Then walking up with his best horse-trading approach, Shout-along blasted out so everyone in distance couldn't help but hear.

"Wouldn't take that bull-headed cayuse for a gift," Shout-along boomed. "Not unless I had a hankerin' for walkin' home every time I dropped a rein."

Mister Flashy-Dress took the bait like a trout minnow. "Sure he's a good looking piece of horse flesh," Shout-along went on kind of shy-like. "But wait until he can see you with both eyes and knows he's rein free. You won't be able to get in cussin' distance of him."

The stranger was "from Missouri." He swung out of his saddle, dropped his bridle reins, and walked away. A dozen steps or so and he turned around and started back to his mount. About that time, Shout-along lifted one hand to scratch his head, as if not believing his own eyes that Chuck's animal hadn't bolted. Only about that time, Chuck's horse like to have tangled hoofs, shying for open ground. The stranger tried to come in from the opposite side. No luck. Every time he'd get within reaching distance of Chuck's horse's reins, the animal would bolt. Finally, darned if Mister Flashy Stranger didn't have to get one of the Indian kids to toss a rope on the animal to bring him in.

By then he was so mad he started looking for Chuck, ready to fight. Then is when old Shout-along went to work. He cooked up a deal where all bets were called off. He had the stranger believing it was all a joke because they knew the horse and his habit and he, being a stranger, was primed for the hoax. Chuck got his horse back but he had to hand out ten bucks to Shout-along for the cost of undoing the "trick," as Shout-along called it.

After he got his ten-spot, Shout-along went into a huddle with the sheriff's youngster, over where he had been hid out behind the feed tent. Shout-along slipped the kid a couple of dollars for the use of his sling shot and for the kid's excellent marksmanship. Every time Shout-along lifted his arm to scratch his head, the sheriff's kid let go with a sling shot slug into Chuck's mount's flank. The only real trick breaking Shout-along had to do was break the ten-spot!

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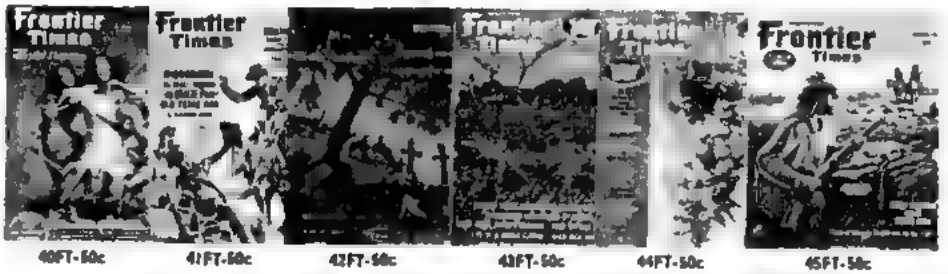

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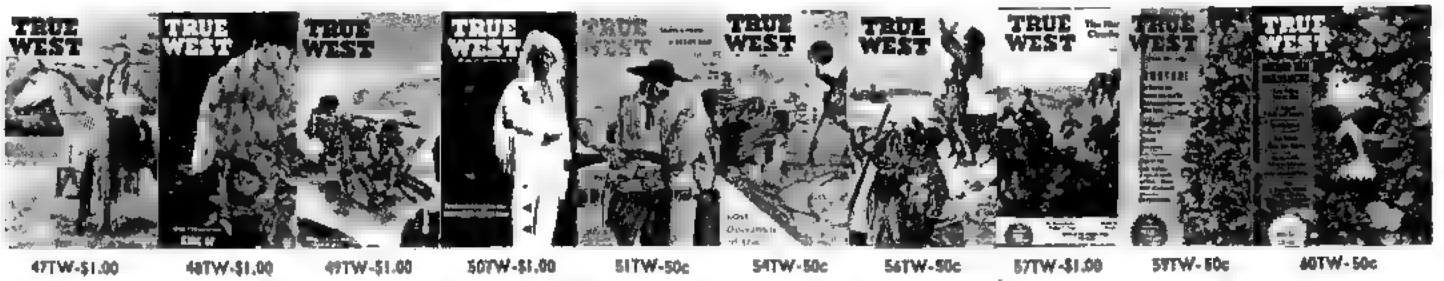

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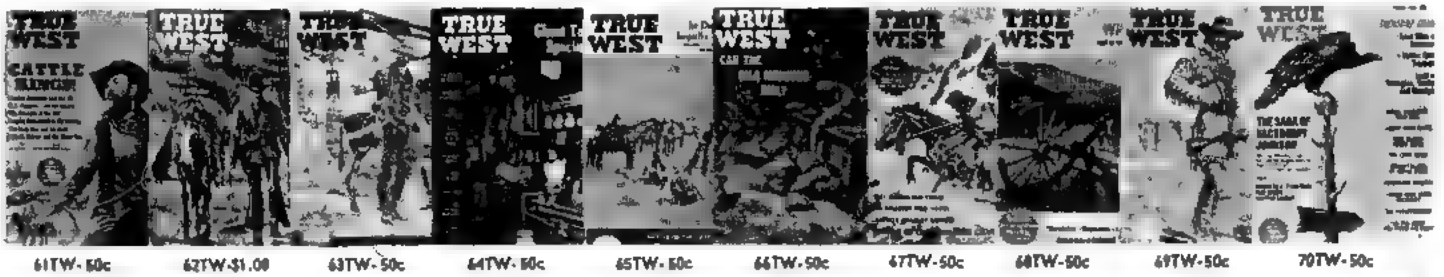

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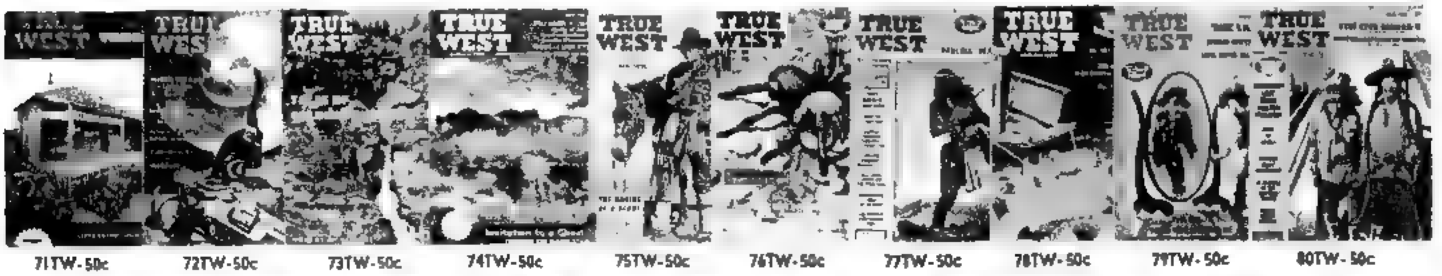

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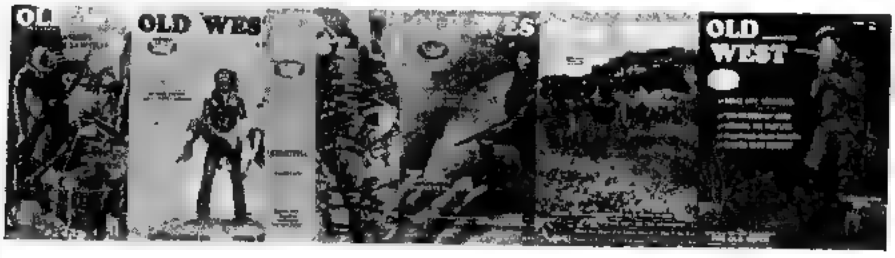

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Slate Mountain's Golden Tunnel

(Continued from page 15)

swore as his drinking bout continued, at least a million dollars in gold piled in the narrow tunnel. Near dawn, the Irishman walked out of the saloon and dropped dead on the street. His demise was declared a stroke brought on by too much alcohol.

Abandoning his job, the bartender outfitted and set forth to recover the treasure. But luck was not with him, either. He got as far as Eagle when he suddenly got too sick to proceed. The attending doctor, James Hermans, gave him the bad news—consumption. The doctor cared for him for a month before the bartender cashed in his chips. Hermans was given the paper on which Slate Mountain was mapped and directions written for reaching the shaft. The instructions read:

"From Tennessee Pass follow a wagon road along Eagle River to the mouth of Brush Creek. Go up the creek five miles to the forks. Follow the east fork until reaching a shift of rocks three miles upstream. They reach the side of the creek. Turn north into a dry gulch. Follow it until coming to four trees standing close together. The bark has been peeled off around them for two feet. Go due east from this point directly up the slope of the mountain until reaching a shaft dug straight down into rocks and dirt from the first spill. This is about 300 feet from the timberline and the trees have been broken off about fifteen feet high. From the top of this hill you can see the Mount of the Holy Cross." The "hill" mentioned was no less than Slate Mountain.

LOSING little time outfitting, Hermans took a packer and proceeded up Brush Creek. He found everything mentioned in the description except the shaft penetrating the avalanche slide. Mount Holy Cross north and the Rockies west were plainly visible in the distance because the day he viewed them was clear blue.

Disappointed yet firmly convinced of the existence of the Rogers gold-laden tunnel, Hermans told the story as he knew it to many other people. Indeed, to anyone the least interested he showed the map and hand-written directions. So many prospectors entered the region looking for the fabulous tunnel that they found other gold and silver lodes. By late 1896 more than 300 claims had been staked in the varied mineralized district. Some showed evidence of copper and lead.

The Polar Star and Cave mining companies put in an ore processing plant through which ran more than ten million dollars worth of gold and silver. By 1901 a twenty-five stamp mill was handling ores from three big producing claims. Over on New York Mountain (New York Camp) the New York mine was sending down an average of $300,000 monthly in values.

One of the many prospectors who staked claims in the region was Alfred Ellington. At the time he was in and around New York Camp, tales of Rogers' golden tunnel were told and retold

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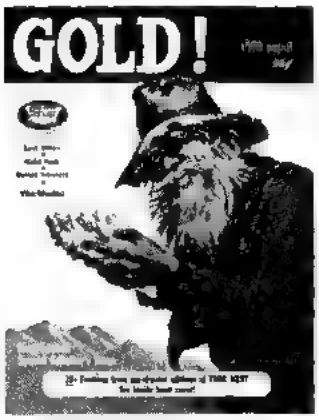
"There is something in a treasure that fastens upon a man's mind. He will pray and blaspheme and still persevere, and will curse the day he heard of it, and will let his last hour come upon him unawares, still believing that he missed it only a foot. He will see it everytime he closes his eyes. He will never forget it until he is dead and even then he will pass it along to his survivors, that they may follow in his footsteps. There is no way of getting away from a treasure once it fastens itself upon your mind."

—Joseph Conrad



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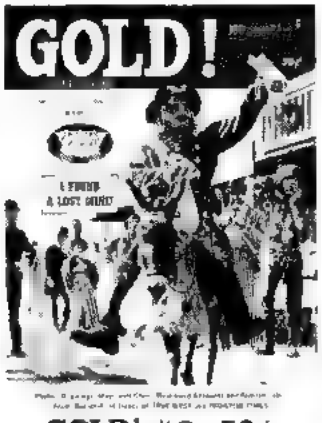

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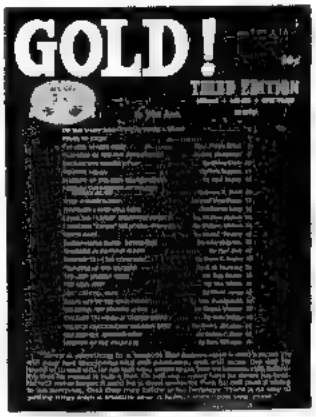

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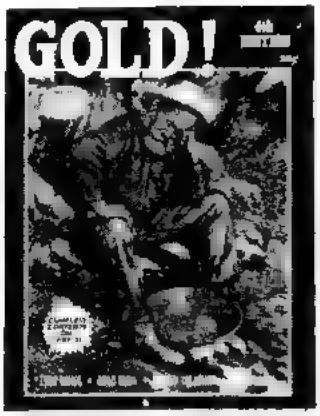

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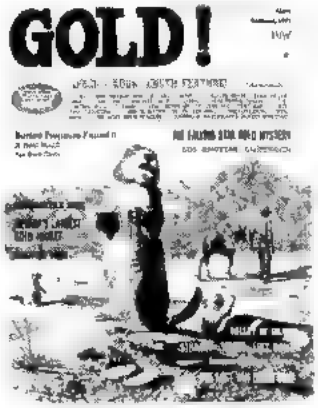

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around every campfire where men of the same hopeful calling gathered. The legend had reached exaggerated proportions and was largely bum dope. No one could determine which one of the many heights had been called Slate Mountain in earlier days. The mine enjoyed a rather sinister reputation. Considering its connection with the deaths of several men, superstitions had grown concerning it. Ellington was not superstitious but he simply did not consider the old Rogers business worth looking into. Too much fancy was mixed with the fact.

However, in early summer of 1902, Ellington was wandering through the mountains and gulches where dozens of dreamers had been before—just taking his time. One late July day he climbed up a steep slope some distance before recognizing evidence of an old avalanche. Halting, he looked toward timberline at a few trees that had grown back where the old slash once stood. Ellington started crossing the slope horizontally toward the west side of the mountain. Within a few feet he almost stepped into a ten-foot hole. It was barely large enough for a man to work his body downward.

Noticing that descent could be made by stepping on protruding rocks, Ellington started down cautiously, aware that a slip could be disastrous. The marks of metal tools on the rocks' surfaces revealed that the caved-in shaft had been man-made.

The top of the slate debris in the fill shook beneath his weight. Suddenly the mass gave way, plummeting him downward. Landing at least thirty feet below, Ellington was badly shaken up and bruised. His small prospector's pick had been lost in the fall, but the canvas pack on his back, used to carry ore specimens, still clung to his shoulders by the straps.

Not knowing how much deeper the shaft might be, he moved around gingerly while recovering from the spill. Except for being confined in small space there appeared no immediate danger. Sunlight shone down from above and a dark hole appeared to the right. It was then that he discovered that he had fallen into a tunnel. Carefully moving one flat stone at a time, Ellington could soon crawl into its stygian blackness.

In places there was sufficient space to stand in a stooped position; the tunnel was approximately four feet wide. Feeling along one wall he started moving deeper. Almost immediately his legs encountered an obstruction. It proved to be a pile of something like gravel, piled on the tunnel floor.

Ellington struck a match. Under its flickering light he easily recognized coarse gold. For a moment he caught his breath. A great fortune—dug out by dead men—lay at his feet. The story of the Rogers party find was indeed true.

The match burned to Ellington's finger and he dropped it. Bending down he filled his pockets and the canvas pack sack with nuggets. The pack held about twenty pounds.

Now the problem was how he might climb out safely, but he felt confident of doing so. Whoever put down the shaft—either the unknown prospector or the Irishman and his partner—had made it barely wide enough for a man to negotiate.

Ellington pulled the pack sack around in front of his body and, testing the projecting rocks to be certain they would hold his weight, he lifted himself about half-way out of the shaft. Below him dislodged fragments dropped into the

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tunnel with resounding noise. Fine dust lifted up around him. Ellington knew better than to hurry despite his anxiety to get out. Blood dripped from his face where sharp rocks had struck his forehead and cheek.

As he stretched his arms outward to loose stones piled around the top of the shaft, his footing suddenly gave way. Desperately clinging by his arms on the surface he heard more and more rocks breaking from the sides. Greatly alarmed, and with fast waning strength, Ellington used the power of his arms to hurl his body upward and out.

For a moment he lay breathing hard. Rocks still thundered into the shaft. His awareness of danger, even out of the shaft, made him tremble with fear. Never quite gaining his feet, he hurtled down the slope, sliding in loose rocks and dirt till he reached the bottom.

Bruised and shaken, Ellington hobbled his way from the mountainside to camp. Some of the gold had been lost from his pockets and the pack, yet he still had at least twenty-five pounds. All the next day he rested in camp. The following day he ascended the mountain over the route used before, veering across to the west.

At the old avalanche site only a sea of sharp-cornered slate covered the area where the shaft had been. Indeed, Ellington could not estimate with any degree of accuracy just where he had found it. For that matter he had no intention of again risking his life in the shaft even if it could be relocated. He felt certain, anyway, that it had been completely filled this time.

Packing up, Ellington started out to the south. In Durango he sold the gold, saying nothing about where he got it.

Having had enough of prospecting he went on into the San Juan River Valley and bought a farm. His days in the high mountains were definitely ended.

A Trek to the Gold Fields

(Continued from page 33)

wrote Wash and he joined them. Water still cost four dollars a day. This "dirt" paid each man nine dollars a day.

They had left their provisions at Four Springs Valley and had loaned Thomas Brison, a miner there, sixty dollars. Wash returned to get the money and provisions, and then they all stayed at Four Springs Valley until early summer when the water gave out. They had to have water so they went north to the American, Yuba, and Feather Rivers. The mountains along the American River were so steep and tall they had to travel six miles back and forth to get from the base to the top.

There was pay dirt along the American River, but every claim was taken. There was no need for any more workers, so the Bailey brothers decided to try elsewhere. The trail was most difficult over and down the mountains to the Yuba River. Only Indians and footmen could cross it. The little bit of soil and gravel and sand made both climbing up and down hazardous. It took half a day to go up and only by using dogs could they descend safely on the other side to the river.

Morrison's Diggings were in a deep valley where the winter snow got to be more than thirty feet deep. Provisions to last all winter had to be brought in during the fall. Here the Baileys built houses of straight pine and fir logs. Each house had a porch frame made by extending logs from the roof and supporting them with a post. When the snows came, they beat the snow back and packed it with their shovels, forming an arch overhead and making a tunnel from one house to another so they could visit each other during the winter.

BY GOING north and northeast, they had reached Morrison's Diggings the latter part of July. The miners there were washing gold found mixed in with dirt and quartz rock. When washed in sluice boxes, rocks came out round, smooth, and white, each about the size of a man's fist. Wash thought that if they had such stones back in Illinois, they would make a beautiful walk or drive.

Here they found another uncle, Issac Bailey, and his son, Jesse. Fourteen miles farther, over the mountain, they came to Poker Flat. Here they learned that on the other side of another mountain were new diggings on Nelson Creek. Wash went back to tell his Uncle Issac and Jesse, and they returned with him to Poker Flat where Crawford and the others were waiting.

An old Scotsman named Wright had found a rich claim near Nelson Creek. The men agreed that there must be a lot of gold in the creekbed. Digging a new channel to turn the water, they hoped to find a rich fold in the bottom of the drained creek bed. One evening they rolled over a large boulder and found sand and gravel which yielded seventy-five dollars worth of gold. Issac Bailey stayed at this claim. The others went on down Nelson Creek some twenty miles.

"Gold," wrote Wash Bailey, "was found in what was called bars; that is, where rock, gravel and sand had lodged on either side, or across the river. Some of these bars would be very rich in gold.

"There were, also, what were called gulches, running out from the river on either side. They often headed the valleys. These gulches ran out between mountains and when they headed pretty well up toward the top of a large mountain, they divided the rivers into what were called ravines, All of these ravines would have gold in them. The bedrock would rise up on both sides and the lowest place in this bedrock was called the lead. Some would be richer in gold than others, taking the name of rich lead or poor lead. Often there were places upon the sides of the mountains where the bedrock was almost bare, and in these places were cracks, or seams, down in the bedrock, where the gold would be found mixed with sand and dirt.

"When the first miners came, they did not know how to save the gold and they had no tools to work with. They used their jack-knives to dig the gold out of these crevices and carried it in their pans to where there was water and washed out the dirt and sand. When the

miners had picks and shovels, they made rockers. They were made just like the rocking beds of the old-fashioned kind to rock babies in, only one end was out, except about two inches at the bottom for what they called a riffle to lodge the gold against. They put another of these riffles up higher in the rocker for the same purpose. They made a box four square that sat on top of this rocker with a sheet of iron with round holes punched in it to let the gold and sand through. They would then fill this box with pay dirt with one hand, and rock with the other. They would gather up the gold and what little sand remained behind the riffles, place it in their pans and wash it out, leaving nothing but the gold and some black sand.

"Another plan and a better and faster method was to use what they called the long tom. This was made of plank about six feet long and three feet wide. The planks were cut curved on the lower end, so that the sheet iron with the holes in it would turn upward. The upper end of the tom was made of planks, sawed sloping and drawn in, which furnished the water for washing.

"When they washed the gold with pans they would throw all the top dirt away until they got down deep enough to find it sufficiently rich to pay, then they would pan out the rest of the dirt in the bedrock.

"When we mined in California, we washed with sluice boxes whenever we could get plenty of water. Sluice boxes were made by sawing the bottom board two inches narrower at one end than at the other so we could place the end of every box in the upper end of the next box. We had slats nailed across the top of the boxes to keep them from spreading. There were slats for riffles, two-and-a-half or three inches wide, fitted down tight on the bottom, for the gold to lodge against. The gold, with the sand and dirt, would then be removed and panned out as in other methods mentioned above."

WASH had appraised the land in the areas of the Indian country as he had crossed. The soil in the Platte River Valley was good. From there on west over the mountains, the earth was good for grass in places but not for raising crops. In the desert areas sagebrush and sand covered most of the region. In some places balsam fir grew. But Wash said he never saw any land on the entire trip which appealed to him like that in central Illinois.

He sent money back home and his father invested in the land where Belleflower now is, the price being $5 per acre. He sold this upon his return in 1856 and bought other land north of Cheney's Grove or Saybrook. Again he sold at a profit and bought land in DeWitt County, paying $22 per acre.

As a child I was used to seeing Mr. Bailey uptown greeting friends and expressing his interest in events of the day. His memory at age eighty-four was remarkable and he could remember accurately dates and historical data.

I have often thought of all the gold-seekers who wound up empty-handed after their terrible ordeals in getting to the goldfields. But Washington Bailey was unique. He made his fortune and came home to a long and happy life.

Henry Wickenburg's Old Colt

(Continued from page 31)

supplied a goodly share of the precious metal. In 1865 Wickenburg sold his mine holdings to the B. Phelps interests of New York for $85,000. Complaints, cross-complaints, charges and counter-charges followed the transaction until it reached national significance. So much litigation followed that the transaction was never legally consummated. Just who owns what is still debatable today.

The birth of the town of Wickenburg was a result of the Vulture Mine operation. By 1866 it was one of the largest in the state and missed being chosen as the capital by a scant two votes. It also marked a period of rampant murder and rapine throughout western Arizona. The town was a hotbed of shootings, stabbings, holdups, bribes, thefts, blackmail, swindling, mismanagement and general fraud. From 1865 to 1880 over 400 men were killed by Indians, bandits and the general lawless populace of the town. Wells Fargo drivers were shot from ambush, bullion carriers and guards were murdered for the gold they transported and sought to protect.

These conditions continued until 1890, when the forces of nature intervened. About eighteen miles northeast of Wickenburg was the Walnut Grove Dam. In a weakened condition and undergoing repair, the dam was broken by a terrific rainstorm. It was one of Arizona's worst disasters, resulting in some eighty lives being lost, and ranches, mills and mines ruined by the flood waters. The Vulture Mine had given up more than $15,000,000 before the rich vein was lost.

AT THAT TIME Henry Wickenburg lived quietly in an adobe cabin on a 160-acre farm near his mill on the Hassayampa River. His ranch ruined, tired of unceasing litigation, to the beaten, disillusioned, and exhausted man, his life seemed a failure. Wickenburg was heard to remark that he was very, very tired of the meaningless experience called living. Year by year he became more feeble and his savings dwindled away.

On his 88th birthday, July 4, 1905, on the same spot where he had first camped on the Hassayampa River, Henry Wickenburg was found dead in a thick grove of mesquite trees. An old-fashioned Colt revolver lay by his side. Here history differs, as some accounts state the revolver was clutched in his hand. Since he had no money and no enemies, his death was thought to be suicide. However, Henry Cowell, who was Wickenburg's life-long friend and town recorder almost since the town's beginning, entered after the name Henry Wickenburg the one word "killed" in the official records.

The man gave up, but not the mine. In 1908 a new vein was found, though not the main vein, and produced $2,000,000 during the next seven years. Even the old

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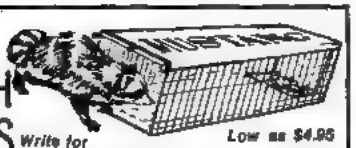

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rock buildings, which housed the first miners, were torn down and produced gold worth $20 a ton. When this vein ran out water seeped into the lower levels, causing part of its complicated machinery to be sold for junk in 1917 and 1918. The Vulture slept until 1931, when a considerable amount of low-grade ore was mined, and in 1940 a 200-ton mill was still crushing ore.

The Colt revolver shown here was found with Henry Wickenburg's body. It is an old pocket model referred to by collectors as the 1848 model. The serial number 5102 establishes the year of manufacture as late in 1847, when the first 6,000 of this model were manufactured. Some parts were at one time replaced with improved pocket model parts from what is referred to by collectors as the 1849 model. The frame is serial number 124,147 and establishes the year of manufacture as early 1855. The cylinder is of the improved type having rectangular stops but does not carry a serial number, nor was it ever serial-numbered. The hammer is also the improved type, having a roller at the base. This was the state of the revolver when found, and no doubt was the same as when in the possession of Henry Wickenburg.

The resting places and travels of this Colt were lost in history until it was acquired by a Baltimore, Maryland, attorney who sold it to William W. Dalrymple in October 15, 1967. Mr. Dalrymple noted the grip butt markings, "H. WICKENBURG" and "ARIZ."

The name is also scratched onto the backstrap, although very lightly and is nearly impossible to read without magnification.

On March 29, 1969, Mr. Dalrymple wrote the attorney from whom he had purchased the Colt in an effort to learn how it came into his possession. The attorney remembered the Colt but not how or where he had obtained it. On November 15, 1969, Mr. Dalrymple wrote Dick Savage, Chief of Police in Wickenburg, seeking more information. Chief Savage had the letter published in the Wickenburg *Sun* on November 27. As a result Mr. Dalrymple received a phone call from Peter Winterable, formerly of Wickenburg, who related information about the man and the town. On June 20, 1970 the historical Colt was obtained for the Fred E. Warner collection.

Today Henry Wickenburg would be lost in the surroundings of the gay desert playround that bears his name. A famed winter resort town, Wickenburg is lively, attractive, full of new homes, 2,455 people, and is a welcome oasis for travelers wanting a delightful climate, ideal location, accessability and plenty of room to grow. There are old-timers who are confident that some day the original vein will be rediscovered and the old Vulture Mine will again approximate its boom days. If one sits quietly on the desert rocks and looks up into the light blue sky, it seems possible that eventually a vulture may again appear and cast a shadow, or a stray burro may point the way.

Trails Grown Dim

(Continued from page 13)

young boy. Caleb was the son of Jessie Jobe and Susan Ann McIntyre. He died in 1927 from an accidental gunshot wound when he was mistaken for a wolf.

Would also like to hear from any relatives or friends of G. W. Mears, or his wife Francis Ann Theodocia Boone. Francis went by the name of Fanny. G. W. went by the name "Wash" Mears. He was born August 20, 1845 in Woodbury, Tennessee. He served in the Civil War and was the son of William Mears and Francis Young. He lived around Thalia, Texas in Foard County. Any information would be appreciated—Mrs. Earl F. Jobe, 310 Northwest 15th Street, Grand Prairie, Texas 75050

Curtis

Who was David Simpson Curtis' father? David was born January 3, 1851 somewhere in Indiana. His mother was Betsey Rogers. His father had been married before and had one son, named John. There were two full sisters, Ella and (?). After his father passed away, Betsey and the children came to Kansas City, Missouri with her two brothers, one named Grant. Betsey married a Leavitt and had one son by him.—Marjorie Webb, Sterling, Idaho 83279

Carr-Renfrew

I'm seeking information about my grandfather, Anderson Carr, born in Fayette County or LaFayette (?) Ohio on April 26, 1842, parents' names unknown. They lived in Ohio, Iowa and Indiana. He enlisted in Vet. Vol. Engineers Co. A, 1st Battalion, July 28, 1862 and served three years. He was discharged in June 1865 in Nashville, Tennessee.

Anderson Carr married Anne Renfrew March 10, 1869 in Ottumwa, Iowa. They lived in Bonaparte, Iowa and had four children: Mary L., Clara, John A., and Loma E. They moved to Ashland, Oregon in 1876, where three more children were born: Anna, Grace and Ralph.

Anderson Carr died July 6, 1885 and is buried in Hargadine Cemetery at Ashland. His wife moved to Los Angeles and lived there until her death in 1935. Will anyone with information about Anderson Carr please write.—Mrs. Ethel Carr Bray, 6735 Babcock Avenue, North Hollywood, California 91606

Kelly

My grandfather Robert Kelly served with Company F, 54th Regiment, Kentucky Mounted Infantry from September 5, 1864 to September 1, 1865. I would like very much to hear from descendants of any soldier having served with the above named military unit and will also appreciate any information concerning the 54th Kentucky Regiment.—John Kelly, 546 West Bellf Street, Roseburg, Oregon 97470

McElwain-Wright-Wimer-Andrews

Lillie Belle McElwain was born in 1880 in Riley County, Kansas. Her mother was Nancy Wright, daughter of George

(Continued on page 64)

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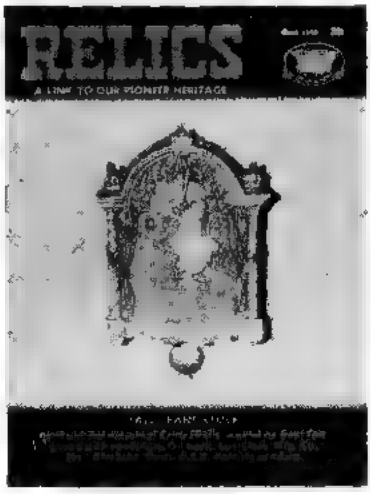

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Double Hanging at Lincoln

(Continued from page 12)

two grounds, they were very active in securing the arrest and safekeeping of Wilson, and Captain Fechet himself took the prisoner up to the Fort and saw to it that he was kept in the guardhouse there under extra strong guard.

As we afterwards learned the particulars regarding that dreadful Sunday afternoon, what had happened was about as follows: The Murphy ring had been defeated in the convention by a large majority. The session in the morning had been a stormy one, and Major Murphy and his associate, Jimmy Dolan, had been greatly angered at the turn of events. They attributed defeat to the fact that Father had thrown his influence against them. The convention adjourned with them both very furious at their defeat and very loud in their declarations that they would win in the ensuing election, come what might.

The convention broke up about noon, and everyone went over to the hotel to get something to eat. Father asked Welch to go over with him to the Wortley Hotel and have dinner, and as they walked over towards it they happened to meet Wilson. Wilson had been working for Father up to a short time previous, and Father greeted him cordially and invited him to go along, too, and have dinner with them. Wilson accepted the invitation, and Father, Welch, and Wilson ate dinner together at the hotel. When they had finished the meal, Father paid the bill for all three. I am positive that these details are correct, for I learned them from Edmond Welch himself.

At the close of the meal, Wilson left the company of Father and Welch. It was not a long time afterwards until Murphy and Dolan got hold of him and offered him $500 if he would waylay and kill Father. They included in their proposal a guarantee that he would not be punished if he were arrested. They claimed they held sway in the county and could manipulate the sheriff and the court. They even armed Wilson out of their store and then instructed him as to where to conceal himself so as to accomplish his dastardly undertaking.

NOT in the least suspecting danger of that sort, Father had gone ahead getting ready to start back home as soon in the afternoon as possible. He had somehow lost track of Edmond Welch and, in searching for him, went up to the Murphy store which was the great gathering place in town. Not finding Welch there, Father started down the street to look for him in other places. Wilson had by that time stationed himself in concealment at a little house a few hundred yards east of the Murphy store. When he saw Father approaching, he deliberately waited until Father had come within fifteen or twenty paces, and then fired with his rifle. The bullet struck Father in the hip, inflicting a severe wound but not one bad enough to cause Father to fall to the ground. Father, of course, had his pistol on, but he did not draw it even after he had been shot. His impulse was evidently to seek shelter behind the walls of a vacant house that was close at hand and, this done, to prepare to defend himself.

But Wilson had not completed his murderous work. No sooner did he perceive that Father was attempting to get in the shelter of the east end of this house than he went around to the west end of it. Consequently, he and Father met face to face back of this house. Wilson did not hesitate to fire again at him, this time sending the bullet into his face near the corner of the mouth.

The shooting quickly brought many people to the scene. Some of Father's friends picked him up from where he had fallen and carried him into the Steve Stanley house. Dr. Caballo, post surgeon at the Fort, happened to be in town that day and at once gave Father medical aid. His effort to save Father's life was unavailing. Father lingered all night and the next morning, but he died about two o'clock that afternoon. The wound in his face made it impossible for him to speak, but he remained conscious to the last moments of his life and knew clearly that Mother was with him. She stayed right at his side all the time, for if she left but for a moment Father became restless until she got back to him.

The next day the body was brought down to our place and buried in our family graveyard. I remember the funeral very distinctly. There seemed to be a multitude of people present, more than I had ever seen together before. What particularly impressed me was the number of Americans who came. I did not know there were so many in the whole county, but the news of what had happened at Lincoln had spread quickly and all who heard it had come, some from a great distance. The burial rites were simple, as they perforce had to be. There was no priest obtainable, and the religious part of the service was conducted by Major Murphy, whose previous education for the priesthood seemed to give him more of a right to officiate in such matters than anyone else in the county.

At the time Mother knew nothing of the part he had played in bringing about the killing of Father. Father, as I have said, was unable to speak on account of the wound in his face, and so he had not been able to tell Mother anything of the motives he might have believed were behind Wilson's action. In fact, the connection Murphy had with the killing did not come out until some months later. At the time of the funeral no one was ready to dare to express a suspicion that Murphy was the instigator of Wilson's crime.

Major Murphy had clearly chosen as agent a former employee of Father's and had coached him to put forth as the reason for the killing that Father had tried to beat him out of some wages that were due him. If Mother had in the least suspected Major Murphy of having a hand in the deed, she would never have permitted him to profane the occasion with his presence.

AS so much was made in the newspaper accounts of a quarrel in the morning between Father and Wilson over a few dollars in wages, I feel it needful to tell something about the relation between Father and Wilson when the latter was

working at our place, and also how he came to leave.

Wilson just dropped in at our ranch one day and applied to Father for work. As there was need for hands just then, Father employed him and put him to work, first on the farm. A little later, Father took him along with some other men to our Feliz place, and put them to building a rock house and a corral. When they completed this work after several days, Father then sent Wilson back to our home place with the ox wagon that had been taken over to the Feliz. Father and the other men remained on the Feliz, and during their stay, the Mes crowd came and stole all the horses they had with them, leaving them afoot. This delayed the return of Father and the others longer than they expected.

In the meantime, Wilson, after his return to our place, made the acquaintance of an old man by the name of Harper, who was working for a few weeks at the Lloyd place while resting his team—a fine pair of black mules—before going on to California. No sooner did the acquaintance develop than Wilson became fired with the idea of going to California with Harper, and he told Mother that he would like to be paid off immediately so he could start. Mother told him that this would not be possible until Father returned from the Feliz, and she encouraged him to expect Father's return shortly. Wilson seemed entirely satisfied about the situation and continued on at our place. He told us he was not in as much of a hurry to leave as he thought he was, because Harper, who had left the Lloyds, was going to remain in Lincoln until Wilson was ready to go along with him. All the time Wilson seemed in the best of humor toward Mother and the rest of us.

He did not work for us during this time, for he considered that his engagement with Father had terminated when he got back to our place from the Feliz. He simply stayed on and spent most of his time getting his traps ready for the journey to California. As he was not especially busy, he talked rather freely to us about himself. According to his story, he was from New York State and had been in jail several times. He even went so far as to claim he had spent some time in the penitentiary at Sing Sing. To hear him tell it, he was most certainly a hard criminal and seemingly very proud of the fact; but I have no way of knowing whether or not he was telling the truth. Vicious men of his stamp often tried to give, after coming West, the impression that they were bad men of the sort described in the language of the time as "wild and woolly and hard to curry." That may have been what Wilson was trying to do in all his big talking.

A few days later Father arrived back home. I remember that he reached the place about two o'clock in the morning after a particularly arduous journey back. Before Father went to sleep Mother told him that Wilson wanted to be paid off and allowed to leave. Father said, "Allright. Tell the clerk in the store to settle with Wilson and pay him all that is coming to him. Have him do this the first thing in the morning."

The next morning Wilson got up early and came into the kitchen. Seeing that the fire had not been made, he got kindling and wood and started one. All the time he talked volubly about how anxious he was to do all he could before leaving us, and he was very expressive of his appreciation of all that we had done for him while he stayed with us. Mother told him that Father had given instructions that his wages were to be paid, and Wilson went over to the store to see the clerk about the matter. He came back and said he would like to have a chance to say goodbye to Father, but when Mother told him that Father was very tired and sleeping late that morning, Wilson said, "Mrs. Casey, I would not have you wake him up for anything in the world."

So under such circumstances Wilson left us and went to Lincoln. He hung around there a week or two but he did not get to go on with Harper on the trip to California. It seems Harper had decided to go on without waiting for Wilson. I have often wondered if somebody did not put Harper wise to the sort of man Wilson was and if Harper did not suspect him of some sinister motive in seeking to associate himself with Harper. One would not have to go farther than Harper's fine span of mules to find an inducement that would have appealed strongly to a man of Wilson's stamp. He would realize that there would be many a spot on the long journey to California where by killing Harper he could equip himself with that valuable pair of mules.

THE TRIAL of Wilson came up in the October term of District Court. Mother went to Lincoln and remained there during the entire time consumed in the trial; she did not, however, think it advisable for us children to go. Circumstances forced her to make an exception in my case. The baby was too young to be left at home, and so Mother took me along to look after him. [This baby was John Casey, the youngest child and the father of Ola Casey Jones.] By that time Mother understood that Father's death had been brought about by the Murphy ring and she was determined to do all she could to thwart any of their plans to let the murderer go free. She could not do much actively, but her presence at the trial would be a mute but powerful reminder to the friends of Father and to those conducting the prosecution that Wilson ought to be given the full penalty of the law.

Undoubtedly the plan was for Wilson

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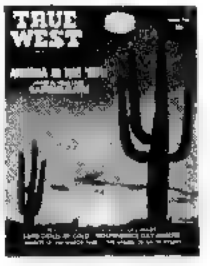

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either to come clear or to escape before or after the trial. The Murphy ring so generally had things their way in Lincoln County that they felt certain of carrying out their scheme in this instance. I remember one day while we were in Lincoln, Captain Fechet came to where we were staying and called for Mother. We were in some rooms Mother had rented, for she would not go to the Wortley Hotel as it belonged to the Murphy ring.

When she went to the door she asked him to come in, but he declined, saying he did not have time. Then he explained he had just come to assure her that the officers at Fort Stanton who had known Father had vowed they would stand by her. He added that they were determined to bring about the assassin's receiving the utmost severity of the law. He then disclosed to her the fact that an emissary of the Murphy crowd had just presented him the proposal that he turn Wilson over to them and let them lynch him so as to save the necessity of a trial, claiming that such a step had Mother's sanction.

Then Captain Fechet gave her this advice: "Mrs. Casey, if I were you, I would not believe a single one of that crowd of dirty scoundrels. Don't trust them at all, for they will do anything on God's earth to turn Wilson free. Now I have come to learn from you how you feel about this thing. Do you want Wilson turned over to them—and that I am sure, means that he will be allowed to escape—or do you want him carefully guarded and tried according to the law?"

Mother's answer was positive and definite enough. I remember it word for word. "My God, Captain, no! I know nothing in the world about having Wilson lynched. I want the law to take its course. I am sure he will get full justice and I want that above all else for the sake of my children."

Captain Fechet replied: "You are exactly right, Mrs. Casey, and we will bring the murderer to justice. I left him in charge of my sergeant and eight men, and I gave them orders to shoot the first man who tried to approach the prisoner. You need not be uneasy about a mob's taking him away from me. If they do so, they will have to kill me and my nine soldiers as well. We intend to see him convicted and hung by law, and I am sure the commanding officer will support me in this statement to the extent of using every soldier in Fort Stanton, if necessary."

I recall distinctly how Captain Fechet looked as he stood in the doorway talking to Mother in this determined manner. He was of medium height, rather heavy-set. He was wearing over his shirt a heavy outer shirt of blue flannel, which was part of the uniform. This was a double-breasted affair, and thrust into the bosom of his shirt were two formidable .45s, their handles sticking out one on each side. Mother, noticing the pistols, remarked: "Be careful, Captain, the pistols might fall out and go off accidentally and hurt you."

"Don't you worry on that score, Mrs. Casey," he answered. "You just take care of yourself and your children. Your husband is gone, but we were his friends. Now we are your friends, and we will stand by you through thick and thin. I am ready for them if they try to interrupt the processes of justice; and I mean business." With that he left us and returned to where he had left the prisoner.

IN those days sessions of court were held in an oblong adobe building that is standing today just east of the Catholic Church in Lincoln. This old building had seen much of the lights and shadows of life in Lincoln. I do not know who built it, but in the early days it was used as a dance hall. It was in it the *baile* was going on the time the Harrell crowd shot it up, killing four men and wounding a woman. It was really the first courthouse of Lincoln County, and court sessions as well as other public gatherings were held in it.

On the [illegible date] of October the grand jury, of which Major William Brady was foreman, returned a true bill against Wilson for murder, and also one against Charles Myrick who was keeping the Wortley Hotel at the time, as accessory to the crime. The indictment of Myrick, however, did not amount to much, as he had left the country and could not be found. At least that was what was said, although it was generally understood that he had simply gone out to Arizona.

Wilson's defense was conducted by two of the ablest lawyers in the country, S. B. Newcomb and W. L. Rynerson, both from Mesilla. The fact that such men as these were employed to defend Wilson certainly lent color to the view that the Murphy crowd was interested in protecting him. These two attorneys handled the case expertly. No sooner had Wilson pleaded not guilty than his lawyers moved for a continuance on the ground that Myrick and another material witness, a soldier by the name of [Sergeant] Falvy, were absent and could not be found at that time.

The prosecution, in charge of District Attorney John D. Bail of Mesilla, was assisted by Colonel A. J. Fountain, whom Mother had employed for that purpose. These were able to resist successfully the motion for continuance, and Judge Bristol proceeded with the trial of the case. The selection of a jury occupied a day or two, and when finally empaneled it consisted of the following: Juan Andreas Silva, Anzelmo Pacheco, Jose Chavez Sanches, Palo Pinto, Pedro Annalla, Tranquilino Montoya, Francisco Sanches, Augustin Torres, Juan Lucero, Francisco Romero, Lueras and Ramon Montoya. The taking of testimony and the arguments by the lawyers only required a day or two more. When the case was finally placed in the hands of the jury, they very promptly brought in the verdict of guilty. As I have always heard it, the jury was out only about fifteen minutes, the first ballot showing that all were for conviction on a charge of first degree murder.

Although the trial had progressed rapidly, it had not been devoid of excitement. Certain incidents seemed to show that efforts were still being made to

bring about Wilson's escape. One day Captain Fechet, who was guarding Wilson very closely, happened to notice that he was sitting in a suspicious way. His wrists which were, of course, handcuffed, were held down between his knees, while at the same time there was a slight movement of the shoulders. Captain Fechet jumped up from where he was sitting and rushed over to the prisoner. Pointing his pistol at him, the Captain shouted: "Wilson, what are you trying to do? If you make another move you are a dead man!" An investigation showed that Wilson had nearly succeeded in working his handcuffs off.

Then Captain Fechet exclaimed angrily: "Whose work is this, I'd like to know? Mr. Sheriff, get your key and tighten these handcuffs up good and tight on the prisoner; also do the same for his leg shackles."

Thereafter Captain Fechet redoubled precautions, giving orders to the soldiers on guard that they should never for an instant take their eyes off the prisoner. This could not be termed an unnecessary precaution because it was evident that the Murphy crowd would try any scheme to free Wilson and make good their promise of immunity. When the trial had come to an end and Wilson had been sentenced by Judge Bristol to be hanged on Friday, the 12th of November, Captain Fechet immediately took Wilson back to Fort Stanton for safekeeping until the date of the execution.

WILSON's friends, however, made every effort to save him from the noose. His lawyers tried to secure a new trial, but did not succeed in doing so. Then the Murphy crowd attempted to use their influence at Santa Fe. They laid siege to Governor Axtell in an effort to get him to commute the sentence, and it seemed as if their chances of success in this move were great. The Governor did go so far as to issue a reprieve until December 18 on the ground that he desired additional time to consider the case. Whether he in the end might have commuted the sentence, it is impossible to say, but as it was, Colonel Fountain effectually checkmated the other side. In a letter to Mother dated January 25, 1876, he refers to what steps he took, saying: "I have seen a letter from Wilson in which he denounced me very bitterly for 'hounding him to death' as he called it. My conscience is very easy on that point, however. I had a long talk with the Governor in regard to the case. He (the Governor) had been informed that Mr. Casey had been killed in a street fight with Wilson and that it was not a murder. The Governor seemed inclined to grant Wilson a longer reprieve; and I disabused his mind and gave him a correct history of the affair, and he concluded to let justice take her course."

When the day for the hanging came around, Wilson was brought down to Lincoln from the Fort under a guard of three companies of soldiers. The threats of the Murphy ring about preventing the hanging by some means or other had been so strong that the commanding officer would run no risks. It certainly looked as though there might be trouble.

The Murphy crowd was in a tight place; either they must make their promise of release good, or Wilson would make good this threat to tell all about how he had been employed to do the killing. Captain Fechet guarded Wilson right up to the scaffold, but there he had to turn him over to the sheriff, who at that time was Captain Saturnino Baca.

In order for the hanging to be legal it was necessary for the condemned man to be in the charge of the sheriff at the time of execution. On the scaffold, besides the sheriff and the prisoner, were Father Lamy of Manzano and Major Murphy. Just why and how Major Murphy came to be there, it would be hard to say; but his general prominence in everything that was done at Lincoln made it easy for him to be allowed to be on the scaffold. His purpose there was readily guessed by those who knew the character of the man and the sort of schemer he was.

When everything was ready for the trap to be sprung, Wilson took the opportunity given him to say something—to turn to Mayor Murphy and say bitterly: "Major, you know you are the cause of this. You promised to save me, but—"

[I find no evidence of this elsewhere.—Eve Ball]

Before he could say more, Major Murphy kicked the trigger that sprang the trap door, and Wilson's body shot down through it until the rope was taut. After hanging a few minutes, someone examined the body and pronounced the man dead. Then the sheriff and his helpers cut the body down and placed it in a coffin which was in readiness. There was some delay about removing the coffin from the place of execution, and while it was there a Mexican woman, noticing that the lid was not screwed down, allowed her curiosity to make her raise the lid enough to look in. No sooner had she done so that she screamed at the top of her voice. "For God's Sake! The dead has come to life."

This startling news brought others to the place, and a further examination showed that Wilson was not dead, for the movements of his chest in breathing slowly could be detected even by the eye. To those who knew the situation, it was evident that here was evidence of Murphy trickery. The plan evidently had been to have Wilson taken down as though dead and then to have the body spirited away before the coffin was placed in the grave. But the curiosity of a Mexican woman had brought confusion to this well-laid scheme.

MANY people were exasperated at this attempt at a ruse, and there was a strong demand that Wilson should be hanged again. Major Murphy, however, intervened with the argument that having been once legally hanged, Wilson could not be executed a second time. Naturally his henchmen supported him in that position and seemed ready to try to make the other side accept it, too, at the point of pistols and rifles. But Captain Fechet promptly took the wind out of their sails by simply saying to the companies of soldiers, who were drawn up

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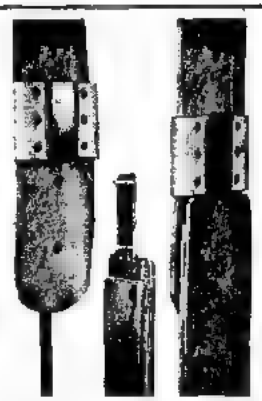

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around the scaffold: "Ready!" And before he could complete the command, the Murphyites had thought better of their determination to use force of arms.

Captain Fechet said to the crowd, briefly but pointedly: "I am here to see the law carried out. I propose to keep the peace and allow no mob violence."

While all this had been going on, several of Father's friends had procured a rope and were ready to see that the hanging was completed. They tied the rope around Wilson's neck, while the body was still in the coffin, and then threw the free end of the rope over the cross-beam at the top of the scaffold. While some lifted the limp body of Wilson from the coffin, five men took hold of the other end of the rope and dragged Wilson up until his body swung by the neck, entirely suspended in air. Then they held it in this position until satisfied that he was dead, this time past all possible mistake in the matter.

Feeling against the Murphy crowd was so strong among the friends of Father that there was talk of going further and lynching either Murphy or Dolan or both. But the soldiers prevented any such outburst of lawlessness. Captain Fechet and Captain Randlett addressed the wrought-up crowd and counseled them to quiet down and conduct themselves peaceably, now that the law had been vindicated and Wilson executed. Under the circumstances, neither group felt like becoming the aggressor, and so the danger of a fight, which probably would have been bloodier than any Lincoln saw in later times when the Lincoln County War was in progress, was averted.

The murder of Robert Casey was avenged in what was the first legal hanging in Lincoln County, and what was also one of those gruesome executions which might be termed "a twice-told tale."

Trails Grown Dim

(Continued from page 58)

M. Wright and Sarah Beegle. Nancy's children, Lillie McElwain and George Cluck, were raised by their Grandparents Wright in Ashland, Oregon. Lillie B. McElwain married in 1895 to Reason Edward Wimer and had five boys and one girl. Parents of Reason were John D. and Samantha Luellen Wimer.

I believe that all of these families came to Oregon from either Kansas or Iowa about 1860 to 1870. I also have information that after the death of John D. Wimer, his widow Samantha married Dennis Lynch.

Would also like information on Abraham Andrews or any of his family. He was born in St. Johns, New Brunswick, Canada in 1903. He married three times—once to Elizabeth Dixon. He had three sons and two daughters: Abe, James, William, and Mary, and lived in Canada.

Abraham married Julia Thomas in 1926 in Detroit, Michigan, moved to Mississippi, left there in November of 1929 and was never heard of again. Would especially appreciate learning the names of the other children and names of parents of both Abraham and Elizabeth.—Betty L. Andrews, 2071 Northeast Stephens Street, Space G-4, Roseburg, Oregon 97470

Needham

I am seeking information concerning Lewis W. Needham, who was born in what is now Randolph County, North Carolina about 1770. No marriage record has been located, but according to the 1800 census of that county he probably married about 1791-92. He moved from Randolph County to Maury County, Tennessee before 1810. Some of his children married there. His family was in the 1820 census of Maury County. By 1821 he was in Madison County, Tennessee. In 1837 Lewis moved to Red River County, Texas and got a land grant of 1280 acres in what is now Cass County, Texas. He made his will December 4, 1848 in Cass County. He left all of his property to his wife Mary Ann (Bruton) Needham, saying that he had from time to time deeded property to each of his children.

Mary Ann was evidently his second wife. We think she was not the mother of his children, whose names are: Rebecca, born about 1793, married Analem Russell; Ann, born 1795 or 1796, married Benjamin White; Susannah, born 1798, married Jacob Miller January 18, 1816; John William, born March 11, 1799, married Nancy Ann Tucker about 1824; Martha, born February 5, 1803, married Wyatt Mooring November 10, 1825; Jesse, born about 1805, whose second wife was Martha ?; Nancy, born 1806, married first to William Hooker Croom in 1827 and then to Bailey Inglish about 1838; and Sina, born about 1814, married John P. Simpson in 1831. These are his known children though we believe he had four or five more.

Mary Ann married a Daniel Hartzo in 1852. I will be most happy for any information concerning the Needham family.—Mrs. Elma J. Hooker, Box 73, Gila, New Mexico 88038

Weissinger

I would like any information regarding a man or family by the name of Weissinger, living in the area of Denver, Colorado in the early 1900s. He supposedly had a blooded horse ranch and originated from Pennsylvania.—Walter S. Williams, 2219 Helene Avenue, Vineland, New Jersey 08360.

Murphy

I'm interested in any information about Joseph James Murphy, born in Liverpool, England. He should be about sixty-seven years old. He was married to Helen Finn from Somerville, Massachusetts. She should be about sixty-six years old. I would appreciate any information from anyone knowing them.—John George Murphy, Box 82, Silver Horseshoe Ranch, Eldridge, California 95431

Cooley

I am searching for information on my aunt, Julia Touchstone Cooley. She married Richard Cooley September 22, 1872

(Continued on page 72)

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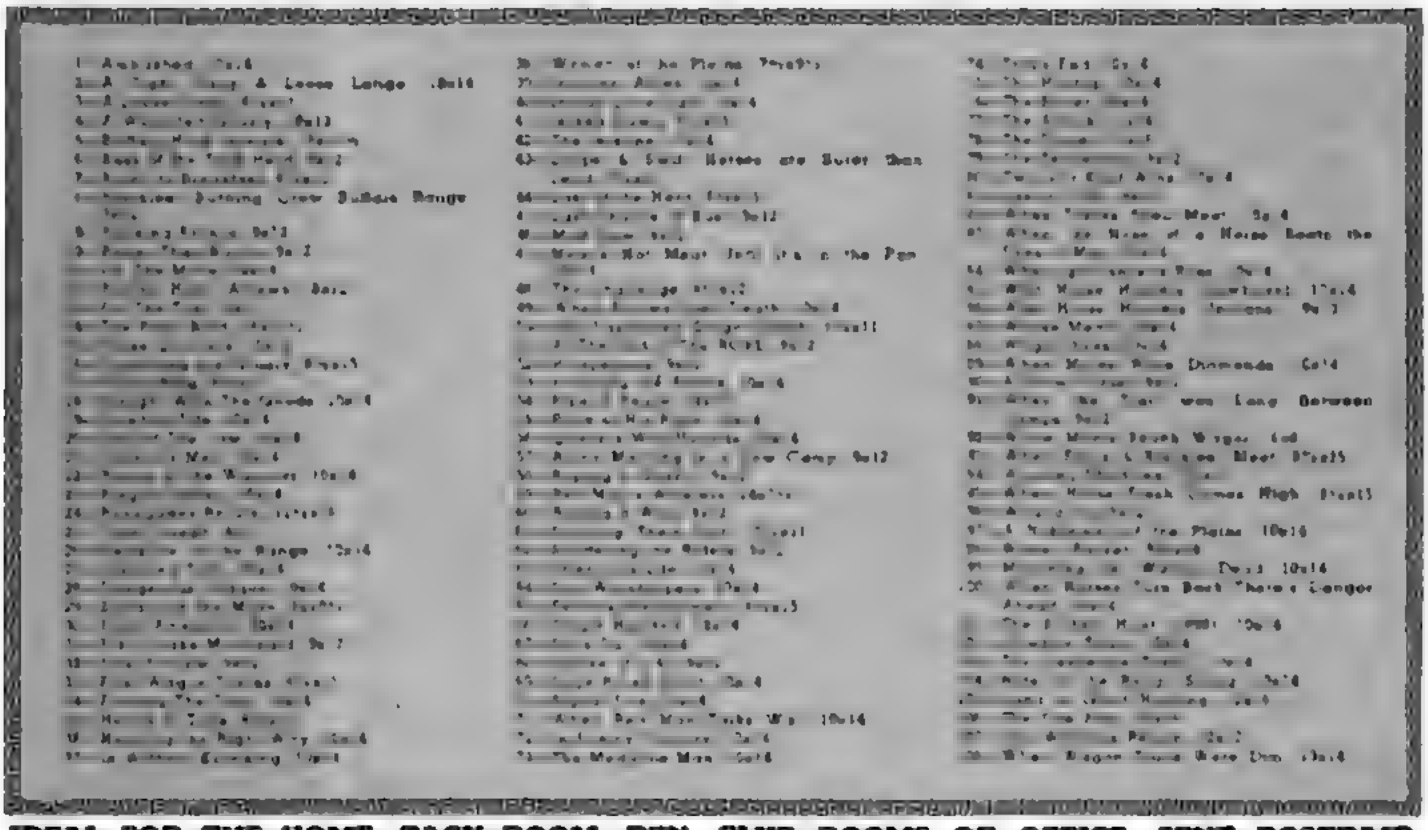

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Courtesy Bancroft Library, University of California

Major Frank McLaughlin standing on a boulder at the bottom of Feather River, reviewing a scene of galling defeat in his quest for wealth.

Tame the Wild River

(Continued from page 35)

Every inch of Major Frank McLaughin reflected a man of great affluence and leadership—all six-feet-four of him. Adding to his imposing appearance was the bulge of a six-shooter in his belt, the heel protruding within easy reach from beneath his jacket. Oroville did not suspect it at that moment, but McLaughlin was destined to change Northern California mining history. He was all spit and polish, dominating everything he beheld. His self-confidence was almost overpowering, yet he was democratic and generous, often boisterous. From the presidential suite in the U.S. Hotel he tossed out tips to the menials like so much chaff.

MCLAUGHLIN'S first act in Oroville was to take up a position at the end of the long mahogany bar in the hotel's saloon and order drinks for everyone. Miners crowded around. To many of them he was a potential grubstaker with an unlimited bundle. McLaughlin, in turn, looked upon them with the same appraisal. Many of them could be rich. He knew that here the most unkempt could be the wealthiest miner or claim owner—like the grizzled eighty-year-old prospector yonder who had just emerged from the Bald Rock region with his burro laden with $90,000 in nuggets and dust.

McLaughlin was an artist in telling stories of a salacious nature, the kind women-starved men enjoy. He well knew how to handle such men, and the crowd warmed up to him. Then, like wild cherry plums shaken from a tree, he began dropping famous names. The miners listened to every word, and were in for a surprise.

At the moment McLaughlin wasn't interested in just plain gold. He was after platinum. Platinum in great quantities. A ripple of excitement ran through the crowd, then silence, as the big man rumbled on. Confidentially, McLaughlin said, he represented Thomas A. Edison who had just perfected an incandescent electric lamp. The inventor needed platinum for the manufacture of filaments—much platinum. The lamp was destined to do away with lighting by old-fashioned whale oil, kerosene, candles, and carbide. A new era was at hand. Ben Franklin had discovered electricity; Edison—and Frank McLaughlin—were going to make it work for the good of mankind. He went on to declare that eastern geologists had already investigated the region, reporting that the Feather River bed was spread thickly with the lead-like precious metal. It was there if you knew how to take it. He, the Major, knew how.

The miners remained frozen where they stood. They knew that platinum existed in the Feather River bottoms, but was it in the quantity the Major envisioned? A platinum lode or source had never been discovered, yet it must exist somewhere in the Sierra else it would not have appeared in their gold pans, rockers and sluices. They had even discarded the metal at times, either in ignorance or lack of interest in anything but gold.

Was there a great lode of platinum available? Thoroughly experienced miners shrugged off the idea. McLaughlin laughed at their lack of enthusiasm; he was unshaken in his own beliefs and theories. He was Bald Rock personified. Indeed, the Great Man knew it all! His magnetic personality overcame much of the opposition. So great was his persuasion that even some of the older miners began to have self-doubts.

Many thought that McLaughlin knew more than he let on. The suggestion was enhanced when he opened palatial offices on Montgomery Street. A long line of investors formed at the entrance. The Major was present, his big right fist

glad-handing all and sundry. Money flowed in. Someone referred to him as "King of the Golden Feather," and he reveled in the title.

William M. Talbitzer, Oroville author, reporter and historian has delved deeply into McLaughlin's adventures. In his authoritative and spritely "Lost Beneath The Feather," Talbitzer writes as follows: "For a man who was to rule as virtual czar over a large part of California's mining industry, who could handle a gun with the best of the badmen, whose status won him an offer by President McKinley in 1898 to become a cabinet member . . . there is strangely little known of McLaughlin's early life.

"He was born in Newark, New Jersey about 1840. As a young man he joined the Newark police department and it was during that period that he became acquainted with a fellow about his own age, Tom Edison. Their acquaintance grew into a friendship that was to set McLaughlin's mining career in motion. The salary of a cop and the endless task of chasing petty thieves through cluttered alleys in Newark soon palled on McLaughlin. One bright day he turned in his nightstick and headed west.

"In 1864 he turned up as a member of the engineering crew that was helping push the Union Pacific across the plains of Nebraska. When the job finally ran out at Promontory Point, Utah, McLaughlin, having talked himself to the status of a full-fledged engineer, headed for Kansas. There was talk about a railroad that was going to start at Atchison, extend to Topeka and then stretch southwest toward Santa Fe, New Mexico. With his gift of gab he got a job in jig time with the engineering department of the line.

"When the road passed through Dodge City, he became acquainted with the town marshal, a fellow named Bat Masterson who was some shakes with a six-gun. During his years in the West and as a cop in the East, McLaughlin had become pretty handy with a hogleg and he gave Masterson a hand on several occasions....

"McLaughlin returned to New Jersey in 1877. He renewed his friendship with Edison and spent much time with him at his Orange laboratories. He also found time to court a handsome widow of amazonic proportions. McLaughlin liked things big, from cigars to women, and never settled for the petite when the mammoth was available. Edison was working on the incandescent lamp. By 1879 he thought he had it when he developed a globe with a platinum filament. There was one drawback—platinum, hard to come by, and the little to be had too expensive.

"Dividing his time between courting his widow and winning the affection of her daughter Agnes, McLaughlin dropped into Edison's lap a solution to his problem. He had overheard a geologist on the Jersey City harbor job remark that platinum had been found in the Feather River running by a town in California called Oroville. 'The yokels out there,' he said flatly, 'don't know anything about platinum or how to reach the lode. I do. Give me your financial backing and I'll get you all the platinum you need to put electric lamps in every house in America!'" Edison considered the suggestion for some weeks while McLaughlin wooed and won his titanic widow.

Edison finally decided to grubstake him. Now the Major had become a full-fledged member of an elite society using the O.P.M. system of financing (O.P.M. meaning other people's money). Thus staked, McLaughlin landed in Oroville.

MRS. MCLAUGHLIN contributed her share to his growing influence. She entertained lavishly. Agnes became the belle of the diggings, sparked by the calloused, love-hungry miners. The Major watched over her as he would his very own, and woe to the man who got out of line.

McLaughlin money (Edison's and investors' alike) flowed away like Feather River floodwaters. His attempts at locating the platinum lode proved he knew little or nothing about mining. Financial ruin stared him in the face when Edison declined to renew the grubstake.

McLaughlin promptly set up the Spring Valley Corporation—a new and grandiose plan to divert the Feather River and expose its gold-crusted bottom. New investors assured his huge salary, plus a controlling interest in stock. He dished out whiskey by the hogshead to those who believed in him. The others took to the side streets to avoid him, or just disappeared from the scene.

For days McLaughlin was observed studying a portion of the river just upstream from the town. He meant to control it come hell or high water, and felt equal to the task. When he saw the high water line he knew he had a chore on his hands, but you couldn't discourage the Major. Once his mind was set there was no shaking him loose from a scheme.

Those who have witnessed the Feather in its various moods know that it is like a beautiful lady—temperamental, savage, fierce, yet at times gentle, patronizing and benevolent. In flood it has left devastation half the length of the Sacramento Valley, its dead strewn along ravaged banks.

The power of the Feather was also present in the man determined to tame it. Loafing was not one of McLaughlin's failings. In 1888 he quietly slipped out of Oroville and headed for London, England. Many Englishmen, along with those of other nations, were at work in the diggings, all after the same will-o-the-wisp—wealth. England was well aware that her nationals were pouring American gold into the vaults of the Old Lady of Threadneedle Street, the Bank of England. Letters written home told vividly of the wealth to be had in western America. Many Britishers yearned for a go at it, but were unable to participate physically; McLaughlin went after their financial participation instead, and found the pickings excellent. Staid old families of wealth sought him out, eager to invest. So did those with just a few pounds. Again Major McLaughlin's magnetic personality and air of confidence prevailed. He was now a promoter on an international scale.

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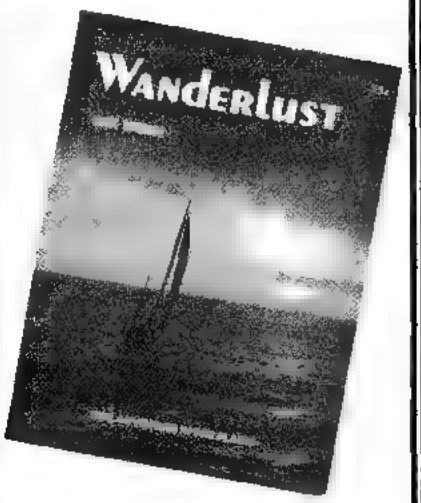

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IF anyone suspected that his promotion was a confidence game, there is no record of it. Cash and pledges poured in, contracts and agreements were duly executed. The exact total may never be known, but it was estimated to be in the neighborhood of twelve to eighteen million dollars.

McLaughlin planned to divert the Feather and scrape its bottom clean in record time. Returning to Oroville, his uppermost thought was to begin his project immediately.

To George Mathews he gave the job of foreman. Mathews was a man who understood mining, flume construction, and engineering. He also knew how to handle men. That he was astonished at McLaughlin's plan would be putting it mildly; he was bug-eyed. Any protestations he might have felt, however, were instantly banished from his mind by the size of his salary. He and his employer concentrated on plans—plans that included a huge river plug or dam, spillways, retaining walls, tremendous flumes. McLaughlin was certain that the gold being taken from the shorelines and sloughs of the Feather was a drop in the bucket to what lay in the untouched river bed. Mathews had to concur.

The job would require the labor of a thousand men. Only the hardiest would be considered, and top wages would be paid. Well liked in the diggin's surrounding Oroville, Mathews sent out scouts to hire men. Soon the greatest undertaking in the gold region was underway. The new Golden Feather Mining Claim was in operation. The Great Man was at last achieving self aggrandizement.

Fabulous Table Mountain looked down upon the project, its tremendous lava cap covering what today's geologists report to be sufficient gold to pay off the national debt. In the canyon below the heat was unbearable. The Feather River rocked with the thundering blasts of explosives that ripped and tore into its vitals. With picks, shovels, wheelbarrows and Fresnos the sweating, cursing workmen quickly created a barrier that Bill Talbitzer refers to as the "meandering Great Wall of China." Mrs. Florence Boyle of Oroville recalls the excitement.

McLaughlin generated many enemies in his mania for wealth. There were those who were impoverished by his unscrupulous activities, some of which were as unstable as a gold pan full of mercury, rushing this way and that. But threats and insults rolled off him like water from the backs of the salmon spawning in the Feather. The Major's six-gun was always in plain view, and the striking power in his great shoulders was a jaw-breaking force to be reckoned with. He was the BOSS and he made sure all knew it.

McLaughlin often spied on his men from the craggy slopes. Loafers were fired. The work shift was 12 hours long in 100-plus temperatures. McLaughlin ignored a man's taking a slug from a whiskey bottle, so long as he never missed a swing of his pick.

No complaints were registered against the wages. They were the highest. Yet foreman Mathews had frequent difficulties, and fights were numerous. If Mathews was unable to handle a situation the Major was right on the spot to take over. His fists and his six-gun promptly restored order.

A thousand men, coupled with that many more from outlying diggings crowded the Oroville saloons on a Saturday night and taxed the town to its limits. McLaughlin bailed many of his miners from the calaboose on Sunday morning in time for work, and deducted the cost from their pay envelopes. Nature might slow the tremendous job temporarily, but no mere man was permitted to do so.

Through 1892 and 1893 the toil went on. Flash floods destroyed some construction at various times, but the Major had men on hand to quickly repair the damaged sections of what was being called "McLaughlin's Wall." To speed up the project he added a night shift of twelve hours. The diversion wall and flumes snaked their way along the river for a full two miles. Mining men and engineers from all over the country came to inspect the huge undertaking; most were awed by its gigantic proportions and hitherto untried engineering feats.

Florence Boyle recalls that many Italian stonemasons were imported for their unmatched skill in the wall building. McLaughlin may have held the hope that his wall would remain a monument to him—one which would last forever. (Completion of the Oroville Dam and the huge Lake Oroville behind it recently inundated McLaughlin's Wall beneath a hundred feet of navigable water.)

In 1896 the dam, the flumes, and the spillways were completed. The Feather was turned from its course, pouring thunderously through the open gates into the flumes. The great wall held the mighty torrent. A blast of cool air lifted from the rushing water and the crowds from Oroville and surrounding regions gathered to watch felt a distinct drop in the sizzling temperature. Feather River had been tamed!

Now the rock and boulder-strewn bottom of the river lay bare. Pumps were put to work to drain the deeper potholes. Amused prospectors looked on, exchanging significant glances. They knew what the Great Man was about to find. The platinum lode? Gold deposits of incalculable value? They looked on silently, expectantly, watching the Major descend to the exposed river bottom.

What McLaughlin expected to find and what he actually exposed would have taxed the sanity of a weaker and more honest man. Vicious floods of preceding years had filled the potholes with rusted picks and shovels, wheelbarrows and ore carts, iron rails, mine buckets, hydraulic monitors, pots and pans, cutlery of all kinds, old iron beds and corrugated roofing, smashed ore wagons, Chinese ginger crockery, Oriental brass objects, opium pipes and lamps, and mercury casks, many of which today are in the Pioneer Museum in Oroville.

It was then that the "yokels" who had confined themselves for years to grins and winks, Talbitzer reports, let loose

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with some gusty belly laughs—the last laugh.

The gold and platinum recovered by McLaughlin was insignificant. The two-mile stretch of the Feather he had tamed was almost barren of precious metal. Additional mining did, however, fetch up a million or two in placer, for McLaughlin, as always, refused to admit defeat. Like the beautiful lady, the Feather can be cruel and benevolent.

Experts had attempted to advise McLaughlin of almost certain failure. Many had prospected the location at extremely low water and knew that before them others had done the same. The bottom had already been virtually stripped clean. Chinese miners could find gold where a Caucasian would stumble blindly past it. These same experts declared that had McLaughlin selected a spot for taming the Feather a mile or two upstream, using the mining skill he bragged he possessed, he would have struck it filthy rich. It was left for the owners of the famous Cape claim to accomplish what the Major failed to do. There the Cape owners recovered one million dollars in placer gold from every one thousand feet of their river bottom claim.

If Major McLaughlin felt sick, he failed to reveal it. He had already sunk $12,000,000 in English pounds in his project, plus a few million, more or less secured locally. But none of his own funds had been invested; the O.P.M. system had been at work for him. McLaughlin was not a stockholder, and emerged financially independent from the West's greatest mining fiasco. All he had to do was abandon the project and exit quickly from the scene.

The fact that the Major quit in the millionaire class pointed the English finger of suspicion his way. A man from Scotland Yard was sent to investigate. When the investigator arrived in Oroville, McLaughlin voiced his indignation in no uncertain terms. He considered it an insult, and indicated publicly that if the investigation continued, one Scotland Yard detective would be sent back to England in a pine board box. The man disappeared as suddenly as he had arrived.

The dam, flumes, bypasses, gates—the works—were blasted out of existence. The wall remained, perhaps as the Major had intended it. The river was free to return to its original course.

THAT was the Major's final effort and he went into exile with his buxom mate and her daughter Agnes. He had built a palatial mansion farther south in Santa Cruz.

He left behind him the City of Oroville, itself sprawled on top of a prehistoric stream bed of huge dimensions. The Chinese living there say they can mine thirty-five cents worth of gold out of every pound of red soil covering the alluvial gravel. What lies at bedrock is a matter for conjecture. Reportedly one syndicate has offered to purchase the city and move it intact to another location, and pay all expenses for mining rights. The offer has been rejected. The golden Feather River flows past like a singing trout stream and gold is still panned by the casual citizen or tourist in search of a thrill.

McLaughlin also left behind him the biggest mining failure of all times. He barricaded himself in his mansion and sulked, though he lacked nothing in worldly goods. Mrs. McLaughlin died on November 17, 1905. Agnes remained single. She had so many suitors that she could not decide which would make the best husband. Now she was practically an old maid, but the McLaughlin fortune was still attractive to certain gentlemen. Agnes helped make life a bit more bearable for the discouraged Major who found a new great loss in the death of his wife.

McLaughlin must have heard the voices of the miners, laughing at his failure with all the derision they could muster. He may have reviewed the eagerness with which the English people entrusted their savings to his care—and imagined them reduced to poverty. That his mind began crumbling with remorse is almost certain. He was, after all, a man of some conscience, yet bitter over his failures. Agnes was his only comfort. Then it happened.

McLaughlin snatched up his old six-gun and sent a bullet through his stepdaughter's head, killing her instantly on November 17, 1907. Then he calmly mixed himself a strong drink and allowed the burning liquid to flow down his parched, aching throat. Draining the last dregs from his cocktail glass, Major Frank McLaughlin slumped over, dead. He had laced his final drink with strychnine!

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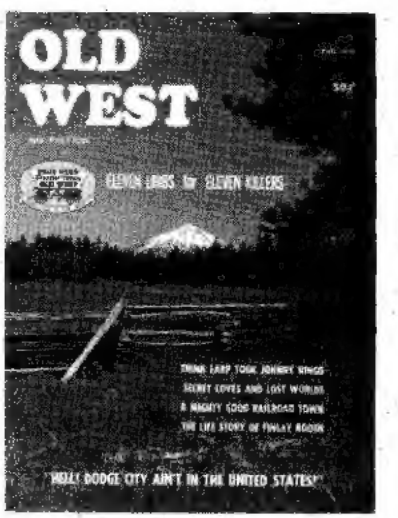

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Trails Grown Dim

(Continued from page 64)

at Bandera, Texas. About 1879 or 1880 they rode away in the night, on horseback with three small children—Callie age seven, Irby or Arby, and a baby, one month old. They were not heard from again.

Julia's father was John Touchstone. Richard Cooley was a gunsmith and horse trader. Julia's mother was Eliza Green Touchstone; brothers were Irby Buckhannon and Joseph Dennis Touchstone; and sister was Barbara Crickett Touchstone. She also had a half-brother, Lynn B. McDermott.—Julia Touchstone Stover, 1120 South 13th Street, Grover City, California 93433

Myers

I would like to hear from anyone who has information on or is a descendant of Cook Myers. He was born April 24, 1851 in Fountain County, Illinois and married Almeda Pitts, born in 1853 in Illinois. Later in life (1893) he moved to Ponoka, Alberta, Canada, where he died in 1836. —Dwight Balb, Rural Route, Wainwright, Alberta, Canada

Williams

I would like to correspond with anyone who has information about James M. Williams who died in St. Mary Parish, Louisiana before January 12, 1850. His wife, Phoebe Ann Nickelson, petitioned the district court to appoint Edwin A. Williams as under-tutor to her four orphaned sons: Dexter Watson, William Rufus, Edwin Harrison, and Walter Brashear Williams.—Ralph L. Roye, Box 214, West Glacier, Montana 59936

Seavers-Fiske

My great-grandfather, John W. Seavers, was born at Hebron, New York in 1821 and had two brothers, Julius Horace Seavers and Rodney Seavers. Their parents, Lyman H. and Sally Seavers, moved to Darien, Wisconsin with the children in 1839. Most of the Seavers were railroad people, including my grandfather, Dan H. Seavers. I would like to get in touch with any descendants of Sarah J. Fiske, wife of S. W. Fiske. Sarah's father, Horace, kept a diary for over fifty years which should yield many interesting facts about the Seavers.—Rodney Seavers Russell, 901 Meadow Street, Colfax, Washington 99111

Fairfield

I am trying to find out where my grandfather, Harry Fairfield, was born and trace his life before age twenty-eight. He was born in 1866. His children remember being told that his mother was killed in a tornado and that he lived in foster homes or orphanages. One daughter thought she heard that he came from Indiana. The only facts known for sure about him are that at age twenty-eight he married Charlotte Mary Price. This was January 22, 1894 at Council Bluffs, Iowa. Both parties gave their residence on the marriage certificate as Gretna, Nebraska. They lived in the Waterloo, Gretna, Rosalie and Bancroft, Nebraska area. They had six children. Certainly would appreciate hearing anything about him or any Fairfields.—Jean Clark, 1619 West 17th, Sioux City, Iowa 51103

Varvel-Varvall-Sleeper-Beardsley

Daniel Varval of Kentucky moved west to Iowa and in 1836 settled with a partner, William Clark, on the banks of the Maquoketa River at what is today Monticello, Iowa. On December 15, 1840 he married Margaret Beardsley. They were married by a justice of the peace named Lathrop Olmsted, also an early settler. The marriage record's spelling is "Daniel Varvall" and "Margret Beardsly." I believe this to be incorrect and Varvel to be right.

After the Civil War, the Varvels moved westward, either to Woodbury County, Iowa, or into Nebraska, the Dakotas or Montana. Because of his prominence in early Monticello, Mr. Varvel has been nominated to the Monticello Hall of Fame. I'll appreciate any information on Daniel Varvel before or after his twenty-five-year stopover here, or on his children: Alexander, Louisa, or Sarah whose married name was Sleeper.—C. L. "Gus" Norlin, 323 North Chestnut Street, Monticello, Iowa 52310

Chrisman

John H. Chrisman was a justice of the peace, Texas Ranger, Confederate war veteran and father of eleven children. He was born May 25, 1821 in Charleston, Indiana and died in 1921 in Cleburne, Texas. His two wives, Samantha Minnis and Sarah Mitchell, were born in Illinois as were his two oldest children, Rietta J. Chrisman Logan and George Chrisman. The others, J. C., Nannie, Frank, Arch, Glenn, John H., Royal, James, and Benjamin H. were born in Texas. I would like information about this family and about the parents of John H. Chrisman.—Shirley L. Will, 508 East Wilshire Avenue, Santa Ana, California 92707

Sherttley

Would any of your readers know Everett W. and Etta Sherttley, last known to have lived in Fort Worth. Both had been married before. Mr. Sherttley had two daughters living in Texas but I don't know their names. Mrs. Sherttley had two sons. One, Robert Sherttley, is now deceased. I was married to him at the time. The other son was Lee Doty. He may still live in Oklahoma City or may have moved to Texas. The Sherttleys had a couple of friends in Texas named Earl and Grace Evans. They lived in Fort Worth.—Betty Stone, Route 2, Viola, Wisconsin 54664

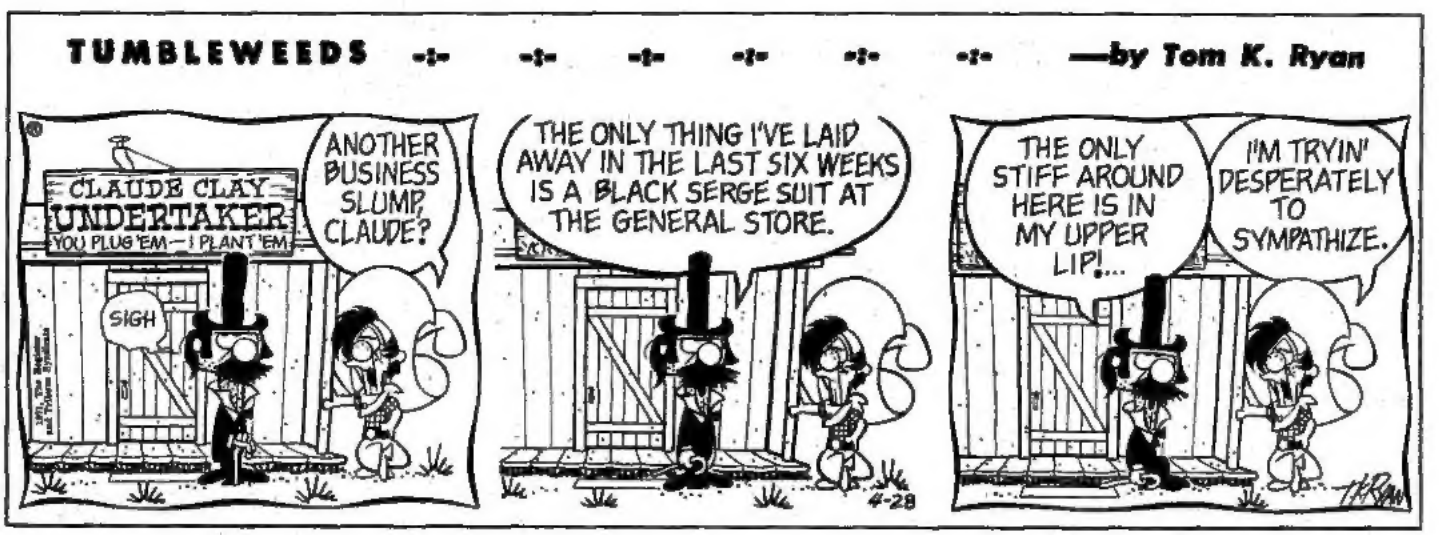
Thomas

I am writing as a last hope for information about my sister, Lilly Maybelle Thomas, last heard from in 1928 from Bishops Lodge, Santa Fe, New Mexico. Any information about her will be appreciated.—Mrs. Ira B. Smith, Sr., Route 1, Box 298, Eureka, California 95501

Blake—Whittaker

Have lost contact with Cliff Blake, my father's brother. His last known address was in Mississippi, but he now lives in Florida.

Also need information on Whittakers or Whitakers in Kentucky, county unknown.—Mrs. Cannie Whittakers, 501 East Walnut, Walnut Ridge, Arkansas 72476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—Joe "Hosstail" Small

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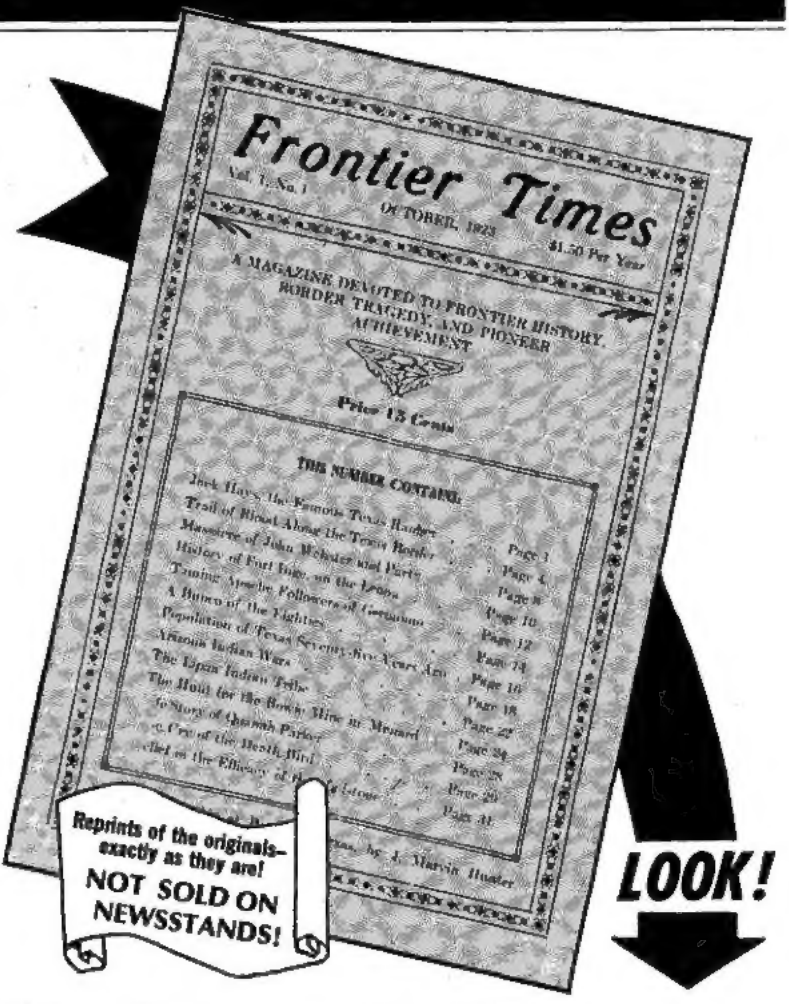
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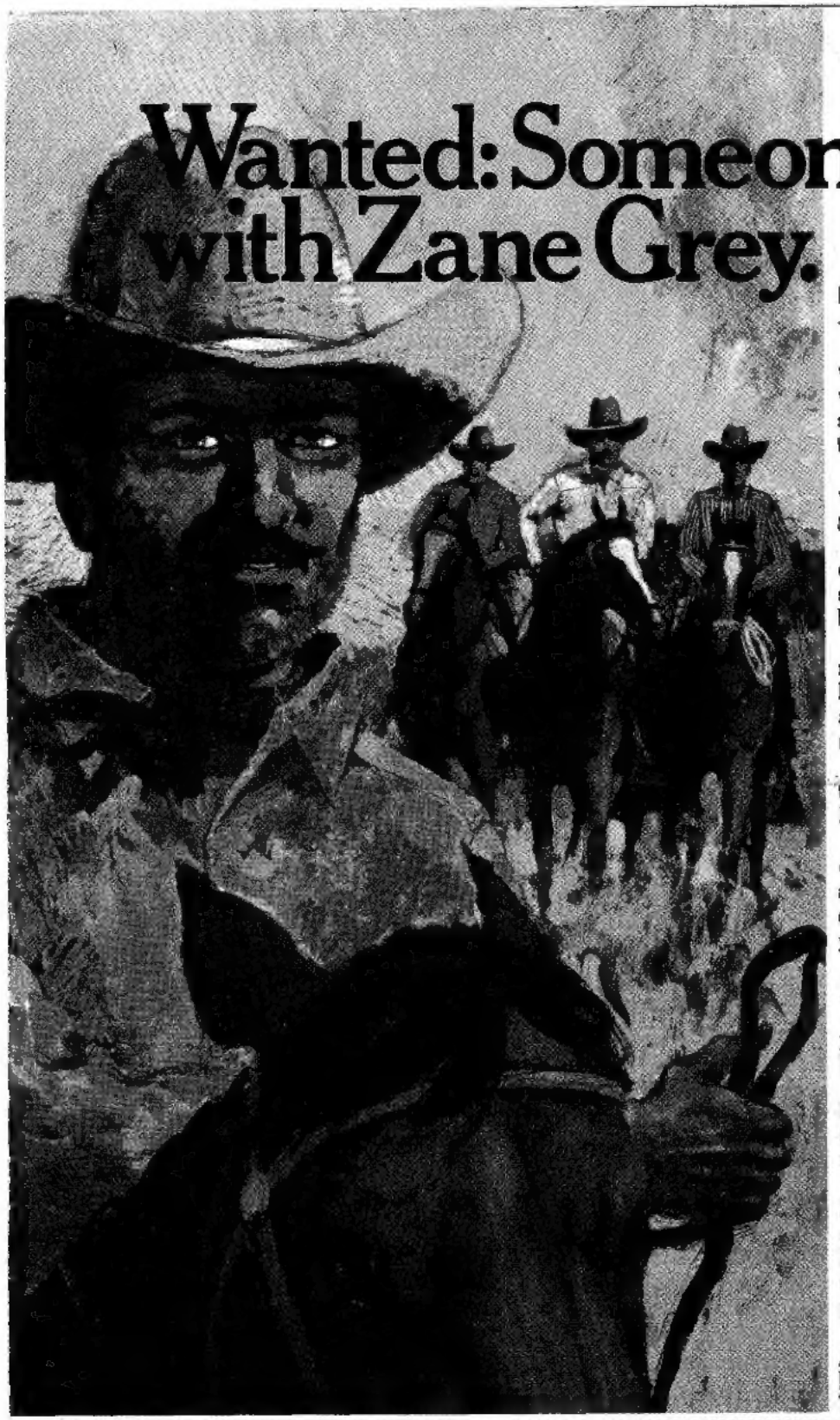

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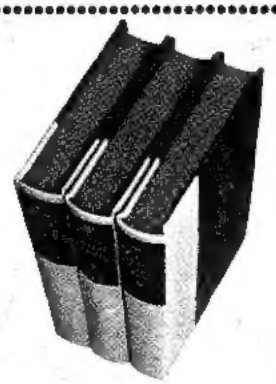

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